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**ON BEING REQUIRED TO OFFER ACTS OF PRAYER AND WORSHIP TO  
GOD**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**The Christian Church, speaking both to its members and to all humankind, proposes, commonly, that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God. However much Christian theologians approach the place of prayer and worship in the life of human beings it is not evident that they commonly question the notion that human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God. In this study I have examined directly, in a manner which is not explicitly and commonly evident within Christian theology, some of the ways in which we might approach the notion that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.**

**The core of this study is an examination of a series of texts drawn from the thirteenth century to the present day which, I show, do offer elements of an answer to my question. I explore the answers I can derive from the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, from English and Scottish philosophers and from English devotional writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from Kant, from a series of nineteenth and twentieth century philosophers, and from Christian resources of the twentieth and twenty first century. I examine the terms within which the notion of the requirement to offer prayer and worship to God is most commonly set and I explore the ways in which these terms are commonly approached among twentieth century philosophers. Finally, I offer elements of my own approach to the question 'Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?'**

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**CHAPTER ONE**  
**ON PRAYER AND WORSHIP AND ON BEING REQUIRED TO**  
**OFFER ACTS OF PRAYER AND WORSHIP TO GOD**

Countless numbers of human beings engage in the practice of offering prayer and worship to God every day of their lives; countless others never have and perhaps never will engage in such practices. There are those of us who feel a need to offer prayer and worship to God and there are those of us who feel no such need. There are those among us who believe that we have laid on us a requirement that we are to offer acts of prayer and worship to God; there are those among us who harbour no such belief at all. This study explores some elements of the practice of offering prayer and worship to God. In particular it focuses on one question about the practice of prayer and worship: 'Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?' The notion that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God has not commonly been subjected to direct interrogation in the manner I am proposing to do in this study. My question, posed in quite this form, is something of a novel question. It is my hope that the study as a whole will show something of the significance of this question.

It might at this stage be helpful to offer in some manner a sense of the reality and the significance of my central question, to offer an initial justification for the project I am proposing. One way of justifying the asking of such a question would be to offer a few threads of a personal narrative, a narrative

parts of which I share in common with hundreds and thousands of other Christians. This is perhaps a somewhat unusual device to use in an academic study of this kind, but I believe that this might serve, even in some small way, to help to set some initial idea of why I am asking this question about prayer and worship and of why I believe the question is a worthwhile one to ask.

Prayer and worship held a significant place for myself as a child growing up in the Catholic Church. I was taught that I was required to offer prayer, to offer to particular acts prayer throughout the day, to offer morning and night prayers, and to pray before and after meals. I was taught that I was required to attend and to participate in the offering of the Mass, and this most especially on what were termed 'holy days of obligation' and on every Sunday in the year. The demand that we were to offer prayer and worship to God was a requirement laid on us. Failure to pray and failure to attend the Mass, became part of the matter of the sacrament of Confession. Numerous helps were provided for us to prepare ourselves for making our Confession. Examples were provided in the prayer books commonly used by members of the Church of what was commonly there called an 'examination of conscience'. In this examination of conscience we were directed to ask whether or not we prayed; we were taught to confess failure to pray, for to fail to pray was to commit an act of sin. And in this examination of conscience we were directed to ask had we missed attending Mass on Sunday or on any holy day of obligation. This issue was a very serious matter. To miss Mass on these days, without good cause, was to commit a mortal sin and we taught that we were required to confess this grave offence against God when we next went to Confession.

Serving as a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, I became very aware of how much the members of the Church experienced this sense of requirement as they explored prayer and worship. Many of those who came to Confession brought with them a heavily felt burden, the failure to pray and the failure to attend Mass. As a priest in a parish I was engaged in the work of teaching school children the necessity of making acts of prayer and the necessity of attending Mass. I taught the children, as I prepared them for their first use of the sacrament of Confession, the need to confess, when appropriate, their failure to offer daily prayer and to their failure to attend Mass on the days of obligation. Serving as a priest in the Catholic Church as I announced to the members of the Church the times for Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation I often reminded them of the requirement laid on them to attend Mass on these days.

Perhaps in the face of the many changes in the life of the Catholic Church, especially since the Second Vatican Council, one might imagine that what I received about prayer and worship as I grew up might by now have been left behind; but this is not so. In 1998 Pope John Paul II issued an encyclical letter *Dies Domini*. Later in this study I shall offer a slightly more systematic exposition of this encyclical, but for the moment two short passages from this letter will serve my purposes well. We catch a glimpse of the notion that the offering of prayer might be something which human beings must do.

'All human life, and therefore all human time, must become praise of the Creator and thanksgiving to him. But man's relationship with God also *demands times of explicit prayer*, in

which the relationship becomes an intense dialogue, involving every dimension of the person' (John Paul II 1998: p. 18).

We see something of the notion that public worship might be something which ought to be offered. The encyclical traces the history of the notion that there is a requirement laid on members of the Church to attend public worship on Sundays and on holy days and it concludes its telling of the history of the requirement thus: 'The Code of Canon Law of 1917 for the first time gathered this tradition into a universal law. The present Code reiterates this saying that "on Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to attend Mass". This legislation has normally been understood as entailing a grave obligation..' (John Paul II 1998: p. 55).

Serving as a priest in the Anglican Church, in the Church of England, I am less aware of the language of requirement in the Anglican tradition. As prayer is taught to the members of the Church there is a much less marked sense that prayer being required of us than was and is the case in the Catholic Church. Attendance at the celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and on holy days is indeed encouraged but it is not so evident, in much of the common teaching of the Anglican Church, that this encouragement becomes the laying down of a strict requirement to attend this worship. The practice of private auricular Confession is much less evident in the Anglican Church; it is much more difficult to see the way in which the members of the Church regard their failure to make prayer to God and to attend acts of public worship. But here and there in the Anglican tradition we can still see something of the idea that prayer and worship are required of the members of the Church and that failure to offer worship is a matter of sin.

Take, as an example, the words of a bishop of the Church of England, Bishop Michael Marshall addressing diocesan conference in 1993: 'You and I were made for worship; the opposite of sin is not virtue, the opposite of sin is worship' (Good News in Threads of Gold, *See* 1993).

At least some parts of the Christian Church lay before their members the teaching that prayer to and the worship of God are, in some manner at least, required of the members of the Church and, in places they also lay this requirement on all human beings. It is because this teaching is offered and, in some manner this teaching is lived out, that I believe that it is of some value to ask: 'Are human beings required to pray to and to worship God?'

#### The meaning of the terms 'Prayer' and 'Worship'

I need to set out a working description of what I shall take to be the meaning of the terms 'prayer' and 'worship'. In trying to find a working description of these two terms, it becomes clear that the words prayer and worship are used to refer to a whole group of acts and disposition. It also becomes evident that there is an overlap in the way in which these two terms are used.

I shall begin with the elements of a definition of each of these two words found in a common, non theologically technical, dictionary; *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* will serve our purposes well. The noun 'prayer' holds within itself these elements: 'a solemn request to God or to any object of

worship'; 'a supplication, thanksgiving or other verbal or mental act addressed to God', 'requests to God for his blessing on someone'; 'religious worship'. The verb 'to pray' includes in its definition to 'ask earnestly or humbly; beseech'; and most especially it is said to mean 'to make devout and humble supplication'. The noun 'worship' includes within itself these elements: 'Religious reverence, adoration, or homage paid to a being or power regarded or treated as supernatural or divine; the expression of this in acts, rituals, ceremonies of prayer, especially of a public or formal nature'. The verb 'worship' includes within its definition to 'Honour or adore as divine, or sacred, especially with religious rites or ceremonies' and it means also to 'offer prayer or prayers '.

To what can be derived from an ordinary, non-technical dictionary, can be added to what can be taken from a Church resource that has something, at least, of a normative character within the Church, *The Revised Catechism of the Church of England* (1989). This catechism defines prayer in the following manner:

‘Prayer is the lifting up of the heart and mind to God. We adore him, we confess our sins and ask to be forgiven, we thank him, we pray for others and for ourselves, we listen to him and seek to know his will’ (1989, p. 11).

It defines worship in the following manner.

‘To worship God is to respond to his love, first by joining in the Church's offering of praise, thanksgiving and prayer, and by hearing his holy word; secondly by acknowledging him as Lord of my life, and by doing my work for his honour and glory’ (1989, p. 11).

To what can be derived from these sources I add, but very briefly at this stage, something of what can be taken from twentieth century analytic philosophy and twentieth century Christian theology concerning the notions of prayer and worship; these texts have helped to form my own thinking about prayer and worship.

For D.Z. Phillips (1965), prayer is talking to God, a being one does not understand but a being on whom we are all said to depend. Vincent Brümmer (1984) makes prayer a part of a relationship between God and human beings, and an essential part of the moral life, aiding the moral progress, the moral virtue of the one who prays. Hans Urs von Balthasar (1986) locates the heart of prayer, within the notion of contemplation, which is true worship and obedience as the living encounter with God, a looking to God, a hearing and believing of the word of God. Jean Daniélou (1996) makes prayer the principal dimension, the highest occupation of this life, the one thing that really matters in the order of moral values, the developing of all true virtue, the necessary transforming struggle at the heart of human life; it is 'the expression of an ontological bond that exists between God and us' (1996, p.15). Firmly embedded in these descriptions of prayer are the notions of prayer as the encounter with and the relatedness to God, an encounter and relatedness to God that needs to lie at the centre of the moral life.

For Ninian Smart (1972), worship is the human relatedness to the awe inspiring, to the numinous, to the unseen, to the transcendent. Joseph Ratzinger (2000), makes the offering of worship an act of right relatedness to

the revealing God, who has a right to human worship and to whom worship is due, through the play of wisdom ; it is the foundation for true law among human beings , the ordering of all human life. For Ratzinger, those human beings who are related to God through worship achieve true freedom and true dignity; through worship all human beings are transformed and the whole of creation is united with God. For Keith Pecklers (2003) worship is the public service of God and the public service of the community ; it is at heart an encounter with God in which both God acts in us and we act towards God. Embedded in these texts is the notion that worship is also an act of encounter with and relatedness to God which lies at the centre of the fruitful ordering of all human life.

### Models of prayer and worship

Christian theology offers us whole sets of models with which to describe what is happening when human beings offer prayer and worship to God. In the simplest set of models a human being is given a place in the presence of God, either alone or with others, and, in this presence, they offer acts of prayer and worship to God. In the more complex models, prayer and worship are things which go on inside the Godhead, acts of the divine persons within the Trinity itself. In this second set of models human beings are given a place by God within these divine acts, human beings, in some way are incorporated within divine action. However, even within this second set of models, human beings are still placed in the presence of God and in that presence, however it is visualised, and with God, they then offer acts of prayer and worship to God.



Thus, in some manner, when Christian theology approaches the matter of the offering of prayer and worship to God, it sees these acts as human acts, offered at least to some degree by human beings themselves. It is this human component of prayer and worship that I will be examining in this study.

### Forms of prayer and worship

It is a commonplace of Christian theology that the principal forms of prayer we can offer to God are praise, thanksgiving, confession and petition. Many theological and philosophical studies of prayer and worship concentrate hugely on prayers of petition. In this study, however, what I have to say about prayer and worship is directed not only to acts of petition but also to acts of praise, thanksgiving and confession.

### On requirement and on being required

I am going to ask 'Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?' What shall I take to be the meaning of the term 'requirement' in this context?

I propose that for any given human act there are at least three moral estimations of that act.

First, the performance of an action or a set of actions when considered in terms of their moral worth might be said to be morally indifferent. We could choose to do or not to do these actions or sets of actions just as we wish

without there being any question of doing good or evil or right or wrong. The offering or the non offering of prayer and worship to God, when considered in terms of moral worth, might be said to be morally indifferent. We could choose to offer to God prayer and worship just as we wish without there being any question of our doing good or evil or right or wrong. Second, the doing or the not doing of an action or a set of actions might be said to be morally valuable, a matter open to moral recommendation. Third, the performance or the non performance of an action or a set of actions when considered in terms of their moral worth might be said to be demanded of each one of us, might in this sense be said to be required of us. The performance or the non performance of the required act or the required set of actions might then be open to moral praise or to moral blame. I shall examine the practice of prayer and worship in terms of this third mode of moral estimation. I shall examine the notion that a requirement, is indeed laid on human beings to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

I have no intention of suggesting that requirement is the most important element of prayer or worship. I am asking whether or not requirement is in any way at all, no matter how small that way might be, an element of prayer and worship.

## The method of working

Acts of prayer and worship are offered to God. A set of practices is given. I shall ask whether or not these practices are required of human beings. My manner of approaching these practices and thus this question will be to open up, and offer a reading of, sets of texts that consider and guide the practice of prayer and worship and which have something to say about a requirement to engage in these practices. The reading of the texts of Thomas Aquinas and Kant, in particular, which offer such definite, complex and powerful answers to my question, has been set within the context of recent critical readings of these texts.

I am at once aware of the need to set some limits to this study. I propose to limit the terms of this study in three ways. First, in this study, I shall be looking to texts which guide the practice of prayer and worship within the Christian Church. Second, I shall be opening up texts of western Christian theology and of western philosophy. Third, when I do make use of texts and resources within western Christian theology I shall limit myself, in the main, to texts which are drawn from the traditions of Catholic and of Anglican theology. Of course, none of this is to say that there are not resources from outside Christian life and faith in other faith communities, that there are not resources from the Christian communions and the Christian theologies of the East, and that there are not resources from the Western Protestant communions which would all serve to illuminate the question we seek to explore in this

study; it is simply to set some limits to this study so that the essential purposes of the study might be met in some measure and the central question posed in this study might be advanced to some degree.

### The aims of the study

First, I aim to ask very directly the question ‘Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?’ I wish to propose the addition of this question, asked in this explicit form, to the common canon of questions asked within Christian theology and within Western philosophy.

This question I intend to bring to the surface and to ask very directly, in part historically and in part systematically, in a manner not previously attempted by Catholic or Anglican theologians. J.D Crichton (in C.G.Jones, G.Wainwright, E. Yarnold (eds.), 1978) does point to the way in which worship might be explored from an ethical point of view in terms even of owing and debt, but he does not undertake such a project himself, and it is not evident how precisely he would frame a question which related worship and prayer and requirement in the way in which I intend to do in this study. Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells (2004) have brought us very recently a major, extensive exploration of the relationship between worship and morality. Hauerwas and Wells propose a systematic approach to the domain of the moral through an exploration of worship. What they have not done at all, however, is to open up my question about the matter of worship and prayer being required of us. Given such a major, recent, systematic exploration of the

relationship between worship and morality, I wish to urge, all the more, the introduction of my question into the canon of questions asked by theologians and philosophers.

Second, I aim to explore the ways in which my question might be answered both by those who maintain that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God and by those who deny this notion.

### An outline of this study

In chapter two of this study I shall explore what can be drawn from a reading of the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas about the case for proposing that there is a requirement laid on human beings to offer prayer and worship to God. I have chosen to take Thomas as my starting point because it is in Thomas that many of the resources for asking my question and for answering my question in an affirmative mode can be found and uncovered.

In chapter three of this study I shall examine what can be discovered about the changing understanding of the requirement to offer prayer and worship to God among a number of philosophers and theologians of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the work of Immanuel Kant, whose writing has such immense significance for the language of God and the language of ethics, I have found a way of answering my question, in a firmly negative mode, as I read it. In order to bring out the significance of Kant's answer, I have chosen to embed Kant's negative answer within a set of

positive answers offered by philosophers and theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and also within a set of the more or less negative answers offered by philosophers after the time of Kant.

In chapter four of this study I shall explore the twentieth and twentieth century Church and what it can be shown to be saying prayer and worship and about a requirement laid on us to offer acts of prayer and worship to God. In this chapter I shall be opening up the firmly positive answer to my question still offered within a very broad range of texts, of many different genres, to be found within the Catholic and the Anglican Churches.

In chapter five of this study I shall explore a number of terms within which the requirement laid on us offer prayer and worship to God has been framed. Typically this set of terms will include the notions of law, virtue, justice, religion and duty. In this way I shall be opening up an exploration of how far the terms which have been used to set out our requirement are able, today, to carry and sustain that notion.

In chapter six I shall offer ways through my question that have arisen out of my reading of the texts considered in this study. As I offer these pathways through my question I shall also consider the implications of my question for an understanding of God, of the human person, and of the Christian Church.

Because so much emphasis is given to the offering of prayer and worship in the Christian Church I believe that exploring the notion that such prayer and

worship are in some measure required of human beings will be both illuminating and worthwhile. It is my hope that the whole of the thesis, by exploring the notion that prayer and worship are required of human beings, will offer some novel, helpful and significant insights into our understanding of prayer and worship.

The question pursued throughout this study is the question: 'Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?' So as to avoid the constant repetition of the terms of this whole question, throughout this essay I shall, in places, refer to the question explored here very simply as 'our question' or 'my question' and the notion of the 'proposed requirement to offer acts of prayer and worship to God' in terms of 'the proposed requirement'.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PRAYER, WORSHIP AND REQUIREMENT:

### THOMAS AQUINAS AND THE *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE*

Thomas Aquinas has a great deal to say about prayer and about worship. In this chapter I shall explore some of the elements of what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship. I also want to show that Thomas offers us the elements of a definite, but complex, answer to the question ‘Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?’

Thomas has things to say about prayer and worship in many places; so, for example, in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and in the *Compendium Theologiae*. But in the *Summa Theologiae*, his last major and unfinished work, Thomas has a very great deal to say about prayer and worship. He offers us there huge resources which can help us to construct a comprehensive understanding of what he has to say about prayer and worship and which can enable us construct an answer to the question ‘Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?’ For this reason I am going to concentrate in this study on the *Summa Theologiae* (from henceforth in this study, the *Summa*). The core of this chapter will be an



account of my own reading of the *Summa*. All of the references to Thomas are drawn from the *Summa Theologiae*.

As I begin my reading of the *Summa* I shall offer an account of some of the ways in which the *Summa* is read in twentieth and twenty first century scholarship. I shall consider three sorts of readings of Thomas: general studies of the work of Thomas, studies of the ethics of Thomas, and studies of what Thomas has to say about law and about virtue in particular.

What Thomas has to say in the *Summa Theologiae* about the offering of prayer and worship to God is scattered throughout the whole *Summa*. I am going to have to explore what Thomas has to say about law and virtue, most especially, the virtue of religion, what he has to say about the gifts associated with the virtues, and also, rather more briefly, what Thomas has to say about elements of two other matters, the person and work of Jesus the Christ and the nature of the work of the Christian sacraments.

First, I offer a brief review of ways in which the text of Thomas is read by twentieth and twenty first century scholarship.

Second, I shall examine what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship in terms of his understanding of law.

Third, I shall examine what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship in terms of that part of the virtue of justice that is the virtue of religion. I shall consider what Thomas has to say about that gift of the Holy Spirit that is associated with the virtue of religion.

Fourth, I shall examine what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship and the person and the work of Christ Jesus. and what he has to say about prayer and worship and the work of the Christian sacraments.

Fifth, I shall offer my own understanding of what Thomas says about the matter of human beings being required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

#### PRAYER AND WORSHIP IN THE *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE*;

#### READING THOMAS TODAY

First a word about some notable general studies of the work of Thomas, how and where they deal with prayer and worship, and what, if anything, they have to say about my question.

Etienne Gilson (1957) opens up the question prayer and worship purely through an exploration of what Thomas has to say about religion and about the moral virtue of religion. Frederick Copleston (1950) offers a very brief

account of the virtue of religion and, in that place, just touches on the offering of worship to God. Copleston (1965) gives no space at all to what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship. Brian Davies (1993) considers the offering of prayer and worship in two places: first he opens up the question of the relationship between prayer and providence, second, he considers how law governs the offering of prayer and worship to God. Davies (2002) adds nothing to what he had to say in his earlier work about Thomas. Thomas O'Meara (1997) raises the issue of prayer and worship in terms of the demands of the law, in terms of the development of the spiritual life and in terms of the life and worship of the Church. Fergus Kerr (2002) points to the place of prayer and worship as he gives an account of the Christology of Thomas and where, in this context he considers the virtue of religion. Nicholas Healy (2003), and I believe oddly so, given, in the very title of this work, his concern for what the theology of Thomas has to say about the Christian life, does not open up systematically the whole world of prayer and worship in Thomas, nor does he engage with what Thomas has to say about the demands of the virtue of religion.

Second, a brief account of recent studies of the ethics of Thomas, a number of which do look at what Thomas says about prayer and worship.

Ralph McInerny offers us two studies of the ethics of Thomas. McInerny (1982) offers an account of some of the fundamental elements of the ethics of

Thomas; it is more concerned with the formal elements of ethics and does not approach matters as detailed as the practice of prayer and worship. Likewise McNerny's account of the ethics of Thomas (in N. Kretzmann E Stump eds., 1993) does not address at all the offering of prayer and worship. Jean Porter's immensely significant study *Moral Action and Christian Ethics* (1995) does not offer any major account of what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship. John Finnis offers us a major new reading of the social and ethical theory of Thomas (1998). Here he does not address the matter of prayer and worship except in so far as he points to existence of one of the basic goods for human beings, religion, but about the relationship between the good which is religion and prayer and worship he offers us nothing. Stephen Pope's recent work *The Ethics of Aquinas* (2002) opens up the main elements of the ethics of Thomas and he does point to those places where prayer and worship are considered in this ethic. What I am seeking to do at this point, however, is to do what Pope does not quite do, to bring together an orderly account of what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship in the whole of the Summa.

Third, it would be helpful to offer some brief comments on recent studies of the particular elements of the ethics of Thomas which are crucial to our understanding of what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship.

One might have hoped that major studies of what Thomas has to say about law would have given some consideration to the place of prayer and worship. Anthony Lisska's *Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law: An Analytic Reconstruction* (1996) has nothing to say about prayer and worship. Martin Rhonheimer's *Natural Law and Practical Reason* (2000) says nothing about prayer and worship in the ethics of Thomas apart from the simple statement that natural law does include among its precepts the precept 'Worship God' (280). Jean Porter's *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics* (1999), which is only in part a study of the ethics of Thomas, has nothing to say about law and the worship of God.

Again given how much attention Thomas gives to prayer and worship in his account of the virtues one might have hoped that major studies of the virtues in Thomas would have given some particular attention to prayer and worship. Jean Porter's *The Recovery of Virtue: The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics* (1994) is one of the most significant recent studies of the place of the virtues in the work Thomas. Porter gives detailed and particular attention to the cardinal virtues and to the theological virtues; she gives no attention, however, to the virtue of religion. James Keenan's *Goodness and Rightness in Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologiae* (1992) considers the place of the virtues in terms of the notions of goodness and rightness but he does not consider the virtue of religion at all. Romanus Cessario's *The Virtues or the Examined Life* (2002) while it is not in itself a pure study of what Thomas has

to say about the virtues does draw very extensively on what Thomas has to say. He offers a detailed account of the virtues in the life of the Christian and he does pay attention to the virtue of religion. For Cessario a treatise on the virtue of religion and on worship are said to form ‘one of the most significant treatises in the theological discipline’ (149).

In none of these studies of Thomas do we find an account of prayer which opens up the whole range of what Thomas has to say in the *Summa* about prayer and worship and in none of them do we find an engagement with our question.

It is quite remarkable how little systematic attention is given in recent commentaries on Thomas to what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship. No major recent work on Thomas that I have discovered has been dedicated purely to a systematic study of what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship in the whole of the *Summa*. In this study I hope to present the elements of such a systematic reading of what the *Summa* has to say about prayer and worship. Out of this reading of the *Summa* I shall construct what I shall propose what would be the answer of Thomas to my question ‘Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?’

## **WORSHIP AND LAW IN THE SUMMA**

### **Law**

Among the gifts of God Thomas places law. In the *Summa* he offers us a systematic exploration of law. What he has to say about the nature of worship is set out in terms of living according to law. He offers us an immensely complex account of the nature of law. Opening up what Thomas has to say about law will enable us to construct an account of a part of what Thomas has to say about worship.

Thomas proposes that law has two essential elements. First, law has the power of directing. Law is a rule and a measure which leads to doing or refraining from doing. Thomas derives the word law (*lex*) from the word '*ligando*'; law binds, law obliges.

'Law is a kind of direction or measure for human activity through which a person is led to do something or held back' (1a. 2ae. q.90 a.1).

Second, he makes law into a function of reason (1a. 2ae. q.90 a.1). The direction and the measure of human acts comes into those acts from reason. Reason has as its function the direction of human acts towards an end, the planning for an end. Part of the nature of law is to be a principle of human acts; law measures and rules human acts. Law serves to direct us to our good,

to our end, happiness. The acts of human beings are directed not only towards the end of the human individual but also to the end of the community, towards the common good (1a. 2ae. q.90 a.4).

Thomas considers the various forms of law which direct us and measure our actions and which are binding on us and on the ways in which we should act. For Thomas, law may be said to be eternal, natural, human or divine (1a. 2ae. q.91). What relationship does Thomas say there is between any such law and God?

‘Granted that the world is ruled by divine Providence, and this we have shown in the *Prima Pars*, it is evident that the whole community of the universe is governed by God’s mind. Therefore the ruling idea of things which exists in God as the effective sovereign of them all has the nature of law’ (1a. 2ae. q.91 a.1).

Law is, for Thomas, beyond time, it is eternal. (1a. 2ae. q.91 a.1). Thomas proposes that there is a relationship between this eternal law and the world which it governs. Thus: Law operates as a rule and a measure and as such it exists within the thing which is the rule and measure and also in the thing which is ruled and measured. Law resides in God as the eternal law; law also resides in the world that is governed by that law. For Thomas all things participate, in some manner, in the eternal law: ‘it is evident that all somehow share in it, in that their tendencies to their own proper acts and ends are from its impression’ (1a. 2ae q.91 a. 2). Rational creatures share in this law in a particular manner; and this because they act to provide for themselves and for



others; so they share in the work of providing which is the essential work of the divine providence.

### Natural Law

Thomas introduces the term 'natural law'; that sharing in the eternal law by God's creatures is itself the natural law.

'Thus they join in and make their own the Eternal Reason through which they have their natural aptitudes for their due activity and purpose. Now this sharing in the Eternal Law by intelligent creatures is what we call 'natural law' (1a. 2ae. q.91 a.2).'

As Thomas explores the necessity not only for the eternal law but also for temporal human law he begins to indicate something more particular about the character of the natural law. He draws a comparison between the processes of theoretical and practical reason. Theoretical reason and practical reason both begin from principles; from these principles they arrive at conclusions. In the processes of theoretical reason we move from indemonstrable principles, which are 'instinctively' recognized by theoretical reason itself to particular conclusions which can only be discovered by the work and the effort of reason. In the same manner Thomas says natural law has within it 'common and indemonstrable principles' which must then be related to the more particular and specific conditions of daily life. (1a. 2ae. q.91 a.3).

Thomas describes how he believes the natural law comes into operation in the human person. When human beings are faced with the possibility of doing some thing, and thus, for Thomas, when the practical reason is considering doing that thing, the good enters the workings of practical reason. When human beings seek to act to bring about some end then we are said to be acting in some way to bring about the good.

‘For every agent acts on account of an end, and to be an end carries the meaning of to be good.’ (1a. 2ae. q.94 a.2).

Thomas says that the good is precisely what all things seek for (1a q.5 a.1). Those things which are desirable are desirable in so far as they are perfect; in desiring these things perfection is being desired (1a. q.5 a. 1). Practical reason in the human person has, within itself, a first principle which is founded on the very meaning of good itself.

‘And so this is the first command of law, ‘that good is to be sought and done, evil avoided’; all other commands of natural law are based on this.’ (1a. 2ae. q.94 a.2).

These several commands of the natural law direct human beings towards doing or avoiding what the practical reason knows to be the several goods of human life (1a. 2ae. q.94 a.2). Thomas claims that there are more commands of the natural law than this first principle. These further commands of natural law are to be related to the natural tendencies of human beings. These tendencies, and these commands of the natural law, are to be described in three stages. The first stage of natural law principles relates to the

maintenance and defence of the most elementary requirements of human life. The second stage of natural law relates to the demands which human beings share with all other animals. The third stage of natural law relates to the desire human beings, who are by nature rational beings, have. The commands of natural law, and more particularly, the first common principles of natural law, are common to all human beings (1a. 2ae. q. 94 a.4). These principles apply to all human beings at all times, they are unalterable (1a. 2ae. q.94 a. 5), so much so that they cannot be removed entirely from human hearts (1a. 2ae. q.94 a.6).

Thomas traces the workings of the eternal law into the natural law and into temporal human law. The eternal law regulates and measures all creatures; in some measure all creatures share in this eternal law. The eternal law is shared in a special and particular manner by rational creatures; this sharing in the eternal law is natural law itself. The natural law offers us the most general and foundational moral principles. These principles of the natural law are not sufficient to guide all human behaviour for there comes a point where we have to deal with particular circumstances and so a point where we need particular and detailed laws.

### Divine positive law

Thomas also traces the workings of the eternal law into divine positive law. He gives us four reasons why such a divine law is necessary for the conduct of human life. First, because since human life is directed to eternal happiness and natural human resources cannot bring us to that end then we need to be assisted by a divine law which can serve to bring us to that end. Second, because we need to have the guidance and direction of a divinely given law so that we may be assured that what we set out to do is what we ought to do. Third, because we cannot of ourselves have knowledge of the inner motives of others we need a divine law which can check and direct us even in what is a part of the inner life rather than just a part of external behaviour. Fourth, because only a divine law can effectively prevent the doing of every ill and not just certain ills. (1a. 2ae. q.91 a.4).

Thomas divides this divine positive law into the Old Law and the New Law. He draws out a threefold comparison between the Old law and the New law. First, the Old Law is a law given to the chosen people of the Jews and it offers them only a temporal promise of the promised land of Canaan; the New Law offers instead a spiritual and heavenly promise, the promise of eternal life. Second, the Old Law governs our external acts according to a law of justice; the New Law governs us in our inner acts. Third, the Old Law leads us to obey the commandments and to do so for fear of punishment; the New Law leads us by grace to live a life of love. (1a. 2ae. q.91 a.5) The Old Law was binding on the chosen people of the Jews. It was given to a people from

whom the Christ was to come, it served only to prepare the chosen people for the coming of the Christ; it contained only 'the rudiments of justice'. The New Law, is given only in the coming of the Christ whose coming was prepared for by the Old Law.

As Thomas considers law in its several forms he considers the nature and necessity of prayer and worship. He considers the place of prayer and worship as he explores the Old Testament and the Laws of the New Testament. The treatment Thomas gives to the natural law in itself does not open up the matter of prayer and worship; what Thomas has to say about prayer and worship and the demands of natural law is placed within his treatment of the Old Law and the New Law.

### The Old Law

The Old Law has a concern for the worship of God. Thomas examines the worship of God understood in terms of the Old Law. We shall draw out from this extensive treatment of worship what is most especially relevant for our account of the understanding Thomas has of the nature of worship.

Thomas believes that the Old Law looks forward to the person of Jesus and in so doing offers a testimony and a preparation for him. The sense in which the Old Law prepared human beings for the coming of Christ is spelled out in

terms of worship; by drawing human beings away from false worship and towards true worship human beings were prepared for the coming of Christ.

‘The second way in which the Old Law turned men towards the coming of Christ was by predisposing them for him in a certain way. For when it withdrew men from the worship of idols it united them in the worship of the one God by whom the human race was to be saved through Christ’ (1a. 2ae. q. 98 a.2).

Thomas says that this Old Law was given by God to the Jews and to them alone. For Thomas, God bestowed this law on the Jews alone because God intended to draw out from this people the Christ who was to come; God needed to make this people holy so that the Christ might come from it and so he gave them the Law to enable them to be the people out of which the Messiah might arise.

Thomas asks: If the Old Law was given to the Jews and to them alone then was the obligation to keep this law laid on the Jews alone? It is here that Thomas opens up the matter of the relationship of the natural law to worship as he considers the work of the Old Law.

‘The Old Law clearly set forth the obligations of the natural law, and over and above these added certain precepts of its own. It follows that as far as the obligations of the natural law contained in the Old Law were concerned all were bound to observe the Old Law. But this was not because these obligations came under the Old Law but because they came under the natural law. But as far as the further clauses added on by the Old Law were concerned no one was bound to observe the Old Law except the Jewish people alone’ (1a. 2ae. q. 98 a. 5).

Thomas considers the content of the Old Law. The laws held within the Old Law both presuppose and add to the laws which are in us as natural law (1a. 2ae q. 99 a.2 ad.1). Thomas maintains that the Old Law contains three forms of precept: moral precepts which relate to the doing of acts of virtue; ceremonial or ritual precepts which govern the offering of worship to God; judicial precepts which govern the dealings human beings have with other human beings.

Thomas locates the worship of God not only within the demands of the ceremonial precepts of the law but also within the terms of the moral precepts of the Law. The reason that Thomas gives for this is that, for him, the offering of worship to God is also the exercise of an act of moral virtue, the virtue of religion. Because of this, the worship of God is not just a matter of ceremony and ceremonial precepts but is also a matter of morality and moral precepts. Thomas maintains that the precepts of the natural law are general in character and they need to be given a particular application; they are given particular application either by human law or by divine law. Applications of the natural law made by human law are derived from positive legislation and not from the natural law itself. Applications of the natural law made by divine law are derived from that divine law and not from the natural law itself. Thomas offers this significant distinction.

‘Thus to worship God, inasmuch as this is the exercise of a virtue, falls under the moral precept, but the application of this precept, namely that he shall be worshipped by the offering of certain victims and certain gifts falls under the ceremonial precepts. This is the basis on

which the ceremonial precepts are to be distinguished from the moral ones (1a. 2ae q. 99 a.3 ad.2)'.

He says that the Old Law contains within itself a moral precept that God is to be worshipped and ceremonial precepts which determine how that worship is to be offered. But, he says, moral precepts found in the Old Law belong in some way to the natural law (1a. 2ae. q. 100 a.1); in this sense it is in some way a part of the natural law that God is to be worshipped. Thomas thus allows that whatever ceremonial precepts are contained in the Old Law are simply a determination of a moral principle founded on natural law which requires divine worship (1a. 2ae. q. 99 a.4).

Thomas gives the precepts of the Old Law the work of drawing our attention to those things which are a matter of duty.

‘That kind of duty which is determined by law, when it is in the sphere of human affairs, falls under the judicial precepts, and when it is in the sphere of divine matters under the ceremonial ones’ (1a. 2ae. q. 99 a.5).

Thomas believes that the moral precepts of the Old Law are reducible to the demands made in and through the decalogue. He asks whether or not the decalogue itself lays down anything in particular about prayer and worship? We might imagine that among those commandments in the decalogue which have reference to God, as opposed to those commandments which have reference to our relations with others, one or other of these commandments might direct us to the necessity of worshipping God. So Thomas does allow that the commandment which governs the practice of the sabbath does



require of those who receive it that worship is given to God; the commandment governing the sabbath is a command concerning worship and it is a part of the decalogue. But, says Thomas, this commandment governing the sabbath appears in the decalogue as a moral precept not as a ceremonial precept; it is a moral demand that we give time to God not a ceremonial precept demanding particular forms or times of worship.

‘The precept of sabbath observance is, in one way, a moral precept, inasmuch as it enjoins man to set apart some time for the things of God; according to the text, *Be still, and see that I am God* [Psalm 45,11]. In this respect it is comprised among the precepts of the decalogue, but not as to the time appointed, since in this regard it is a ceremonial precept’ (1a. 2ae q. 100 a. 3 ad. 2).

Thomas says that the offering of worship to God, the worship which is due to God, puts human beings in a right relationship to God. (1a. 2ae. q. 101 a. 1)

The ceremonial laws of the Old Law determine, they regulate, the moral precepts which themselves direct human beings to God, to offer to God the worship which is due to God.

Thomas gives two particular functions and values to these ceremonial precepts depending on who is receiving and acting on these precepts. Those who received these precepts who were prone to evil needed the coercion of law to enable them to live appropriately. In particular, those who tended to idolatry needed these precepts to oblige them to turn away from idolatry. Those who received these precepts who were drawn to the good still had need of these precepts. For those drawn to the good would be helped to turn to God in the

circumstances of life and they would also receive those benefits which came through the Law and which prefigured the benefits which would come through Christ (1a. 2ae. q. 101 a.3).

This leads Thomas to consider the character and value of the worship which human beings can offer at various times and conditions in human history. Thomas maintains that in our present condition we are unable to see God directly but that even now we can encounter God as the divine light as it appears to us in and through sensible forms or figures. Those who lived according to the Old Law did not have direct access to divine light nor did they have the way to that divine light which is now possible. So the worship offered to God according to the Old Law was wholly figurative. It was figurative in two senses, figurative of the future and ultimate worship of God and figurative of the true worship which becomes possible in and through exposure to Christ Jesus. The external worship of God is demanded by the Old Law but it is only a shadow of the true worship of God which, when we come to see God directly, will be complete. The ceremonial precepts of the Old Law are to be interpreted in terms of demands made for external worship within a mode of worship which is itself only such a shadow of the worship which is ultimately possible for human beings to offer. In the future state of happiness, Thomas maintains, we shall be able to see divine truth and so our worship will be able to be a pure worship of praise directed to the truth of

God; then it will no longer need to be what it must be now, figurative worship offered to a God who cannot be seen simply and directly as divine truth itself. Thomas compares the demand to worship God set out in the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law to the demands made to worship God which are set out and made possible in the New Law. He says that since the coming of Christ, while interior worship is still incomplete, for we still cannot see God directly, the way to God and to true worship of God has been opened to us. The external worship of God offered now by those who follow the way of the New Law is still, as was the worship offered through the Old Law, figurative worship but now it is figurative in only one sense; the worship of the New Law is now figurative only of the final and ultimate worship of God which will be offered when we encounter God directly. For this reason the worship of God in the terms of the New Law is less indistinct than the worship of God offered in the Old Law; it is a true image of worship not merely a shadow of true worship (1a. 2ae. q. 101 a.2).

Thomas says that the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law are brought into being and effect by God; they are God's commandments. (1a. 2ae. q.102 a.1) These precepts have both a literal and a figurative cause. They guide and rule what was necessary in the time of the Old Law, and in that sense they have a literal sense, and they prefigure the New Law and Christ Jesus himself, and in that sense they have a figurative sense. Thus these commandments have a literal sense: they prevent idolatry, they commemorate something of the

benefits which come from God, they point to some particular divine excellence or they show what frame of mind needs to inhabit those who worship God. Likewise, these precepts have a figurative sense, in the sense that in some way each of these precepts serve to prefigure the person and work of Christ Jesus (1a. 2ae. q.102 a.2).

Thomas points to the way in which the Old Law required the offering of sacrifices. These sacrifices have a literal sense and meaning. They direct those who offer them to God; they are an acknowledgement of the beginning and end of all things in God. They also serve to withdraw human beings from the practice of idolatry and to direct them to the worship of the true God. These sacrifices required by the Old Law also have a figurative sense. They prefigure and so direct those who received them to the coming of Christ and to the perfect sacrifice he was to make (1a. 2ae. q.102 a.3). Thomas points to the way in which the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law give directions about the many things which are involved in or which are used in the offering of worship to God. The Old Law gives directions concerning special times, places, vessels and ministers and in so doing it serves to foster a greater reverence for God. Each of these precepts has both literal and figurative senses (1a. 2ae. q. 102 a. 4). The Old Law also contains within it its own sacraments. The sacraments of the Old Law are consecrations of things and people which direct them for the worship of God. The Old Law sets down ceremonial precepts which require and govern these sacraments. These

sacraments of the Old Law have both literal and figurative senses. (1a. 2ae. q.102 a.5).

Thomas considers the question of for how long do the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law apply. He sets out his understanding of the stages in the history of these precepts. Before the Old Law was given the ceremonial precepts were not in force. Before the giving of the Old Law human beings worshipped God; they did so using ceremonies which were not established by definite law but which were directed only the wishes of those who offered worship. Even here it may be that some human beings were able to offer worship which was both a true worship of God and which even did in some manner prefigure Christ Jesus.

‘But since, even before the Law, there were exceptional men endowed with the prophetic spirit, we may well believe that they were guided, as if by some sort of private law, to fix a certain way of worship which would correspond to interior worship and also be suitable to signify the mysteries of Christ, which were in addition denoted by other things they did according to the text, *All things happened to them in figure* ( 1 Corinthians 10, 11)’ (1a. 2ae. q. 103, a.1).

The ceremonial precepts were given to the Jews and directed their practice of worship. They served two purposes, the direction of worship in the time of the Old Law and the preparation for, the prefiguring of Christ Jesus. These precepts were of value, but their value was very firmly limited. What these precepts did not do was to confer justification on those who abided by them. (1a. 2ae. q. 103 a. 2).

Thomas explores the question of whether these ceremonial precepts ceased to apply once Christ had come. Thomas draws a distinction between outward and inward worship; all outward worship is directed and ordered by inward worship, inward worship is itself faith and hope and charity. Inward worship exists in three times and states, first in the time of the Old Law, second in the time of the New Law and third in the time of the blessed in heaven; outward worship has to be directed by these stages of inward worship. In the first time the faith and hope which is inward worship looked to two things which were still in the future, the time of the hope for heaven and also the time of the hope for the means of attaining heaven. In the second time inward worship still looks to the hope of heaven but no longer needs to look for the means of attaining heaven, for in Christ these means have been established. The outward worship, the ceremonies of the Old Law, cease at the coming of Christ and do so particularly after the time of the Passion of Jesus. Now that Christ has come the ceremonial precepts which pointed to Christ have no further use (1a. 2ae. q. 103). In the time of the New Law the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law having ceased, other precepts may be introduced which are more appropriate to the state of worship in the time of the New Law. The Old Law had required of the people of the Jews that they were to keep the Sabbath day holy so that they might commemorate the creation itself. The New Law replaces this sabbath observance with a commemoration of the resurrection of Christ on the Lord's day. The Old Law called for the celebration of the Passover, Pentecost, the new moon, the feast of trumpets

and the feast of the Tabernacles; each of these is no longer celebrated for they have all been replaced by the new commemorations of the New Law. Given the way in which, says Thomas, the worship of God made possible in the coming of Jesus has replaced the worship governed by the old Law, there is a question whether or not worship offered to God in the terms of the Old Law still has value. For Thomas, so firmly are the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law abrogated by the passion of Christ that to continue to observe the precepts and the celebrations of worship of the Old Law, that it has become mortally sinful to continue to observe them. He declares that the ceremonies of the Old Law are deadly for us and to continue to celebrate them is to sin and to sin mortally (1a. 2ae. q.103 a.4). Thomas surveys the ways in which Jerome and Augustine considered the process by which the observation of the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law became no longer required and became instead a matter of sin. For both Jerome and Augustine for those who have faith in Christ to continue to observe these precepts is for them to observe precepts which have now become both dead and deadly (1a. 2ae. q.103).

### The New Law

Thomas has only a little to say about worship when he examines the New Law. I shall consider, and this briefly, the nature of this New Law; and along with this consideration I shall offer an exposition of what Thomas has to say

here about worship. Thomas gives the New Law two distinct realities; the New Law is a law inscribed in the depths of a human person and it is an outer written law. The New Law is a law written into the depths of a human person.; it is 'the Law of the New Covenant'; it is an inner law 'inwardly implanted in the heart' (1a. 2ae. q.106 a.1). This law does not become a law in every heart: it is 'the very grace of the Holy Spirit, given to those who believe in Christ' (1a. 2ae. q.106 a.1). The natural law as well as this New Law is an inner law written in the heart (1a. 2ae. q.94 a.6). But the natural law and the New Law are not inner laws of the human heart in the same manner.

'Something can be inward in man in two ways. Firstly, with reference to human nature; in this sense the natural law is inward to man. Secondly, something may be inward to man as though added on to nature by the gift of grace. It is in this sense that the New Law is inward to man; it not only points out to him what he should do, but assists him actually to do it' (1a 2ae.q.106 a.1 ad 1).

All human beings have the natural law written into them; only those who have received the grace of God have the New law written into them. For Thomas the New Law is also an outer written law. The New Law has elements which direct us to receive and to live the New Law.

'There do however belong to the New Law certain elements which in a way dispose us for the grace of the Holy Spirit, and some which are concerned with its exercise. These may be considered secondary in the New Law, and Christ's faithful had to be instructed in them both orally and in writing, both as regards matters of faith and as regards actions (1a. 2ae. q.106 a.1).



This secondary element of the New Law is ‘found in the testimonies of the faith and the commandments which order human attachments and human actions’ (1a. 2ae. q. 106 a.2). The New Law is given to those who believe in Christ. It has not always been given to human beings; it was not given from the time of the beginning of the world itself; as itself the grace of the Holy Spirit it has only been given ‘once redemption had been achieved in Christ’. Not all are given the New Law, only those who believe in Christ. Now that the New Law has been given it is set before all human beings.

‘So the New Law is set before all men at all places but not at all times, although at all times there have been men who belonged to the New Covenant as was said above’ (1a. 2ae. q.106 a.3 ad. 2).

Thomas asks whether or not the Old Law and the New Law differ one from the other. In one sense Thomas says that New Law is not distinct from the Old Law. The Old Law and the New Law share the one end, that all human beings might be subject to the one God, the God who is the God of both the Old Testament and of the New Testament. In another sense, however, he says that the Old and the New Law differ one from the other. Although the Old and the New Laws have the same end they do not relate to that end in the same manner.

‘For the Old Law is a tutor for the young as Paul says [Galatians 3, 24], but the New Law is a law of perfection, since it is the law of charity, which Paul calls the *bond of perfection* [Colossians 3,14]’ (1a. 2ae. q.107 a. 1).

Thomas distinguishes the ways in which the Old Law and the New Law work in the living out of a virtuous life. Those to whom the Old Law was given, who were guided by a law which was outside them, were directed to the practice of virtue out of fear; those to whom the New Law is given are directed to the practice of virtue out of love. Having established this clear distinction between the ways in which the Old Law and the New Law work Thomas makes this distinction less of an absolute distinction for he maintains that there were those who, even before the giving of the New Law, had love and the grace of the Holy Spirit in them; for they looked forward to the promises of God; those who lived in this manner belonged in some way to the New Law. Likewise there are those who live according to the New Law but do so only imperfectly for they still need to be directed to the practice of virtue out of fear rather than out of love (1a. 2ae. q.107 a.1).

Thomas describes the New Law as a perfect law and the Old Law as an imperfect law. The New Law, a perfect law, fulfils the Old Law by supplying what was lacking in the Old Law. The Old Law and the New Law direct human beings to their justification but they approach that justification in a different manner. The Old Law offers a figure of that justification in the ceremonial actions it directs and only a promise of that justification in the words it proposes. The ceremonial practices which were a part of the way of the Old Law were only a shadow of what was to come in Christ; Christ fulfilled all of the precepts of the Old Law. The New Law has abolished the

need to observe the ceremonial practices of the Old Law, for these ceremonial practices were simply a figure of what was to come in the New Law; now that New Law has come they are thereby abolished. These ceremonial practices are not now to be observed, they have no further place for they have been fulfilled (1a. 2ae. q. 107 a. 2 ad 2). The observance of these ceremonial precepts is now entirely excluded because the New Law which fulfils them has now been given (1a. 2ae. q. 107 a. 2 ad.4).

It is clear for Thomas that law lays burdens on human beings. Looking to the Old Law and the New Thomas wants to know whether the Old Law or the New Law is the more demanding and burdensome for human beings to receive and to live by. In one respect, says Thomas, the Old Law is more burdensome than the New; in another the New is more burdensome than the Old. Both the Old Law and the New Law impose demands on our internal acts and on our external acts. The New Law lays down demands on the inner acts of our soul which demand more of us than the Old Law had demanded. The Old Law demanded more of human beings in terms of the external acts demanded of us. In particular, the Old Law was more burdensome as it laid on human beings the observance of many more ceremonial practices than the New Law lays on us. The New Law lays on human beings very little more in terms of external acts than are laid on us by the law of nature itself (1a. 2ae. q. 107 a.4).

Thomas gives an account of the contents of the New Law. His first approach to the New Law is to ask whether or not this New Law ought either to demand or to forbid external actions. The New Law itself is primarily the grace of the Holy Spirit which is 'shown in faith working through love'. But the grace of the Holy Spirit does relate in some manner to external realities.

'Thus it is fitting that the grace which overflows from the incarnate Word should be carried to us by external realities; and also that certain external perceptible works should be brought forth from this interior grace, by which flesh is made subject to spirit' (1a. 2ae. q.108 a.1).

External works can still have a significance for this inner life of grace. External works can draw us towards grace; the sacraments of the New Law are themselves external works which can draw us towards grace. External works can be drawn out of this inner grace; there are external works which can be demanded of us and other external works which can be forbidden to us because of the workings of grace. The performance of external works can have significance for those who live the life of grace, which is the life of the New Law. There are, however, many other possible external works which have no relevance for the living of the life of grace, the life of the New Law; decisions about the performance or the non performance of these acts is left entirely to human beings by Christ who is himself the lawgiver. The New Law requires of us the performance of external acts. Thomas asks whether or not the New Law regulates sufficiently the performance of external action; and he proposes that the New Law does offer sufficient governance to the performance of external actions. All that the New Law needs to lay down are

precepts governing the celebration of the sacraments and moral precepts which are already implied in the performance of those virtuous actions by the New Law. Grace comes to human beings only through Christ Jesus; he himself instituted the sacraments which bestow grace on us. The New Law requires the celebration of these sacraments which bring us grace. (1a. 2ae. q. 108 a.2). The New Law lays on human beings the demand for particular external acts; it also lays on human beings the demand for particular interior acts. Thus the New Law offers direction to us about how we are to be and how we are to intend the ends we are to seek. Christ teaches us how we are to fulfil the teaching of the Gospel he has brought to us, 'by beseeching divine help, and straining to enter by the narrow gate of perfect virtue, and taking care not to be led into vice by cunning deceivers' (1a. 2ae. q.108 a.3).

Thomas allocated three forms of precept to the Old Law: moral, ceremonial and judicial but he allocates, it seems, only two forms of precept to the New Law, moral and judicial; he gives no place to ceremonial precepts in the New Law. Does Thomas believe, then, that the New Law, lacking ceremonial precepts, is, in some manner insufficient? The New Law continues to lay down moral precepts, those moral precepts laid down in the Old Law. The New Law maintains the judicial element of the Old Law but it does not do so by laying these down in the form of law; it leaves it to human beings to decide how precisely to act according to these precepts. The New Law lays down no ceremonial precepts, indeed it abolishes these precepts. But it does not

thereby become an insufficient law. The New Law lays down no ceremonial law because all that the Old Law laid down in its ceremonial law is abolished by being fulfilled by Christ, the reality to whom these precepts pointed. As these precepts are fulfilled no new ceremonial precepts are given by Christ. What Jesus did was to teach that the bodily worship prescribed by the Old Law was to be transformed into a spiritual worship (1a. 2ae. q.108 a. 3).

### PRAYER, WORSHIP AND VIRTUE IN THE *SUMMA*

Thomas considers the offering of prayer and worship to God as a part of the work of virtue; as part of the working of virtue he shows how it is that human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God. The offering of prayer and worship to God are acts of a virtue, the virtue of religion, a virtue is to be associated with the virtue of justice as a potential part of that virtue.

I shall need to open up some elements of what Thomas has to say about the nature of virtue itself and I shall also have to open up something of what Thomas has to say about the virtue of justice so that I can approach what he has to say about the virtue of religion. Thomas considers the nature of virtue (*de essentia virtutis*).

‘Virtue is a good quality of mind by which one lives righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God works in us without us’ (1a. 2ae. q.55 a.4).

For Thomas virtue is a good in itself and it makes us good.. He draws on both Augustine and Aristotle.

‘Augustine says *No one can doubt that virtue makes the soul superlatively good* (De moribus Ecclesiae I,6. PL 32, 1314). And Aristotle says, *Virtue is what makes its possessor good and his work good likewise* (Ethics II,6. 1106 a15)’ (1a. 2ae. q.55 a.3).

Virtue brings about a perfection of the powers of the human being (1a. 2ae. q.55 a.3). Virtue is to be located in a power of the soul and it perfects that power of the soul (1a. 2ae. q.56 a.1). Each virtue may perfect only one power of the soul. Thomas divides all human virtues between the intellectual virtues and the moral virtues. The moral virtues are those virtues which are to be located in the appetitive part of the soul; the intellectual virtues are those virtues which are located in the intellective part of the soul. (1a. 2ae. q. 56 a.5) Alongside these human virtues, Thomas places the theological virtues. The intellectual and moral virtues are to be distinguished from the theological virtues. The intellectual and moral virtues correspond with human capacities, they complement the human intellect and human appetites on the level of human nature itself. The theological virtues surpass human nature; they do indeed complement human nature but they do so in a supernatural rather than a natural manner. (1a. 2ae. q.62 a.2).

Thomas looks to the way in which the virtue arise in human beings (1a. 2ae. q.63) He gives virtue a place in human nature itself. Virtue is in us by nature,

and this according to our common human nature and our common human reason, but only in an inchoate manner as an aptitude for virtue.

‘To his specific nature, in so far as in human reasons certain naturally known principles of both theory and practice are naturally present, which are the seeds of intellectual and moral virtue, and in so far as there is natural desire for good in accordance with reason.’ (1a. 2ae. q. 63 a.1).

Virtue is also in us by nature in so far as our own bodily dispositions dispose us well or badly towards certain virtues; each one of us has a natural aptitude to one or other of the virtues. Although Thomas believes that virtue may be in us by nature he also believes that the full perfection of virtue is not in us by nature. Some virtue in us which is in us by nature but this virtue is only in us in an inchoate and imperfect form, and we must be able to acquire virtue for virtue to be clearly, wholly and perfectly in us.

‘It follows that human virtue, ordained to a good measure by the rule of reason, can be caused by human act; inasmuch as they proceed from reason, by whose power and rule such a good is constituted.’ (1a. 2ae. q. 63 a.2).

Through our own actions virtue advances in us; through our own actions virtue moves the virtue that is in us towards perfection, towards the good. Our actions move us towards the perfection of virtue in so far as our actions are directed by a rule or measure against which we can judge the good which is being advanced in us by our own actions. That rule or measure against which



we judge our actions as they move us towards the good may be a rule which is in us as a part of our human reason. This rule against which we judge our actions as they move us towards the good may also be a rule which comes to us from beyond ourselves, a rule or measure which is itself a divine rule or measure.

Thomas believes that not all virtue may be acquired by human acts. The 'theological' virtues may not be produced in us by our human actions but can only be produced in us by divine operation, they are not acquired by our own actions but they are infused in us by God. Virtue which directs us to our good in a way which is measured only by divine law and not by the law of human reason alone cannot arise in us purely through human acts which are directed by the power of human reason alone but only by divine action ruled by that divine law itself. (1a. 2ae. q. 63 a.2) It is not only these theological virtues which cannot be acquired by us by human actions. When the theological virtues, faith, hope and love are given to us then God may bestow on us moral virtues which cannot be acquired by us but which God infuses directly into us. These virtues order our human life so that the whole of our moral life advances in proportion with the theological virtues. The theological virtues, which are infused in us by God serve to direct us to God who is our supernatural end. Moral virtues which are infused in us to accompany the infused theological virtues serve to direct us appropriately in relation to created reality. (1a. 2ae. q. 63 a. 3). The acquired virtues are not of the

same species as the infused virtues for the infused virtues are brought about in us by God working in us and not at all by our own actions and in this manner they are unlike the acquired virtues which are in us through our own actions. Habits, or dispositions, differ according to that to which they are directed; for this reason also infused virtues may be distinguished from acquired virtues.

‘In the same way, also, those infused moral virtues, by which men behave well *as fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God* (Ephesians 2,19), differ from the acquired virtues by which man behaves well in relation to human affairs’ (1a. 2ae. q.63, a.4).

The treatment Thomas offers of the moral virtues revolves around the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, courage and moderation. Thomas extends his consideration of the moral life beyond these four virtues by annexing a whole range of moral virtues to these four cardinal moral virtues. He does this by gathering around the particular cardinal virtue a series of moral virtues that resemble that cardinal virtue. These virtues attached to a cardinal virtue are concerned with what Thomas regards as secondary acts of the cardinal virtue. Thomas speaks of the virtues attached to the cardinal virtues as potential parts of that virtue.

Thomas places the moral virtue of religion within the moral virtue of justice; religion is a potential part of the virtue of justice. It is necessary to pick out one or two elements of the treatment Thomas offers of the virtue of justice to help us to understand the virtue of religion and to draw this account of the virtue of religion towards the central questions of this study.

Thomas says that the very notion of justice, alone among the virtues, of itself implies the notion of giving what one owes to another (1a. 2ae. q.99 a.5.ad.1).

The notion of doing ones duty is a part of the doing of just acts although the notion of duty does have some part to play in the exercise of all of the virtues.

‘Justice in the strict sense regards the duty of one man to another, but all the other virtues regard the duty of the lower powers to reason’ (1a.2ae. q. 100 a.2 ad. 1).

The notion of duty is evident in a manner that it is not evident in any other virtue in the virtue of justice. It is because duty plays such a clear and evident role in the virtue of justice that there is such a clear and definite relationship between the virtue of justice and the terms of the precepts set out in the decalogue.

‘The element of duty in the other virtues is not so evident as in justice. Consequently, the precepts about the acts of the other virtues are not so known to the people as those about justice. For this reason, acts of justice are specially comprised in the precepts of the decalogue, which are the first elements of the Law’ (1a. 2ae. q.100 a. 3 ad. 3).

The virtue of justice consists in giving to another what is their due: ‘The proper act of justice is none other than to render to each his own’ (2a. 2ae. q. 58 a.11). The virtue of justice involves giving fully (*secundum aequalitatem*)

what is due to another: 'The essence of justice consists in fully rendering to another the debt owed to him, (2a. 2ae. q. 80).

### The virtue of religion

Thomas devotes a large part of the *Summa*, twenty questions in all, as many questions as he devotes to the cardinal virtue of justice, to the exploration of religion. Thomas offers his own definition of the term 'religion'.

'Religion consists in offering service and ceremonial rites (*caeremoniam cultumque*) to a superior nature that men call divine' (2a. 2ae. q.81 a.1).

Thomas examines three possible etymological derivations of the term 'religion'. It might be derived from the term '*relectio*' (read again), in which case it may be said to be speaking about 're-reading those things that pertain to divine worship'. It might be derived from '*reeligere*' (seek again) in which case it speaks to us about how 'we ought to seek God again, whom we have lost by our neglect'. It might be derived from '*religare*' (to bind together) in which case it expresses our wish 'May religion bind us to the one Almighty God'. Thomas takes all three derivations of the word religion together to show that religion has something to do with our relationship to God, a relationship which ought to be established and maintained.

'Whether religion is derived from frequent re-reading (*relectio*), from a repeated seeking of something lost through negligence (*reeligere*), or from the fact that it is a bond (*religare*), religion implies a relationship

to God. For we ought to be bound to God as our unfailing principle, we must unceasingly choose him as our last end, and if we lose him through the heedlessness of sin, we ought to recover him by believing and professing our faith'. (2a. 2ae. q. 81 a.1).

Thomas takes notice of the way in which in we can offer worship to God and to others who are not God. He urges, however, that there is a worship which is only offered to God, who is the principle of all things (2a.2ae.q.81 a.1 ad.4) Thus there is special kind of worship which is due to God and is due to God alone:

‘Because special honour is due to God as the first principle of all things, to him is also due a special worship or *cultus*. This worship is called ‘*eusebia*’ or ‘*theosebia*’ as Augustine states [Augustine *De Civitate Dei*, x, I. PL 41, 278]’ (2a. 2ae. 81, q.81 a.1 ad 4).

Thomas considers the sense in which one might call religion a 'virtue'. He is concerned to uncover what good actions belong to the exercise of the virtue of religion. Thomas selects one way in which an action might be said to be a good action: if the performance of an action is the paying of a debt then it is a good action.

‘Paying a debt’ is a good action since it establishes the proper relationship or order between oneself and another, and proper relationships or order, like measure or meaning, is part of goodness, as Augustine says’ (*De natura boni* 3 PL 42,553).

In these terms Thomas then makes religion a virtue: ‘Clearly, then, religion is a virtue because it pays the debt of honour to God’ (2a. 2ae. q.81 a.2).

As Thomas places religion among the virtues; he faces the objection, urged in three ways, that it is not correct to locate religion as a virtue among the virtues. It might be urged that religion is not to be classified among the virtues but rather among the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The argument proceeds thus: In religion reverence is offered to God. But reverence itself is an act of fear; and fear is not a virtue but is itself a gift, the gift of fear (2a. 2ae. q.19 a. 9). Thomas defends his decision to place religion among the virtues. He argues: Giving reverence to God is an act of a gift, an act of the gift of fear; in religion things are indeed done which are done because of this offering of reverence to God; but this does not mean that religion is this very gift of fear; all that it means is that religion though not itself the gift of fear is directed by the gift of fear which, as a gift, is itself more excellent than religion which is itself a virtue (2a. 2ae.q. 81 a.2 ad. 1). It might be urged that religion is not a virtue because it is not an act of human free will. The worship which is to be offered to God alone implies servitude; and does this not mean that it is not free and so that it is not a virtue. But, says Thomas, a slave can still freely offer service to a master; to serve God can still be a free offering from us; and because it may still be offered freely it may itself be a an act of virtue (2a. 2ae. q. 81 ad. 2). It might be urged that religion is not a virtue, certainly not one which arises in us from our very nature. It may be said that if an aptitude for virtue is in us by nature then all that pertains to that virtue is in us by the light of natural reason. But when we observe the offering of worship to God the particular details of the ceremonial elements which are contained

within that worship can hardly be said to be in us by natural reason. Thus, it might be said, that religion is not a virtue. Thomas refuses to allow the fact that because particular elements of religious ceremonies are not given to us by natural reason this means that religion itself is not a virtue and a virtue which arises in us by our very nature.

‘Natural reason dictates that man should give reverence to God, but does not decide its determinate form, which is from institution by divine or human law.’ (2a.2ae. q.81.a2 ad 3).

Thus, for Thomas, it is the case that natural reason dictates to us that worship is to be given to God.

Thomas defends the unity of the virtue of religion. It might be said, says Thomas, that the exercise of any virtue is the doing of the form of act which is the act of that virtue. But in the exercise of religion we do many forms of act; and for this reason religion is not one virtue. It is true, Thomas says, that in the exercise of religion we perform many different acts and it might seem to be the case, therefore, that religion is not just one virtue. But, says Thomas, among these many forms of acts which are a part of the exercise of religion, there is a unity of virtue because in these many acts we are always both serving God and worshipping God. In defending the unity of the virtue of religion Thomas sets out an important statement for us about the nature of worship itself.

‘By one and the same act man both serves God and worships him, because worship regards the excellence of God to which reverence is due (*cui reverentia debetur*), while service regards the subjection of man who by his condition is obliged to give reverence to God (*qui ex sua conditione obligatur ad exhibendam reverentiam Deo*)’ (2a. 2ae. q. 81 a.3 ad. 2).

Thomas justifies why he thinks that there is a particular, special and well defined virtue of religion; in so doing he gives to the virtue of religion a quite immense importance. . He argues that since all of the virtues are directed to a particular good, and since where there is any particular good then there is a particular virtue directed to that good, and since religion is directed to particular good, the giving of due honour to God, then religion is itself a particular and special virtue. He considers the notion that the virtue of religion is not quite so particular and so well defined. He does this by taking up the notion that the exercise of every virtue unites us with God and is, in this sense, the offering of a sacrifice to God. But if the exercise of every virtue is the offering of a sacrifice to God, then the exercise of every virtue is really the exercise of one virtue, the virtue of religion. But Thomas urges otherwise. The performance of every virtuous act might be called a sacrifice because every such act might be performed out of reverence to God. This does not mean that every such act really is truly an act of the particular virtue of religion; all that it means is that the exercise of every particular virtue may be governed by the virtue of religion itself. Religion is a particular, a special virtue through which we are directed to God. This one virtue stands above all



other virtues and commands the exercise of all other virtues (2a. 2ae. q.81 a.4 ad. 1).

The exercise of the virtue of religion offers that worship to God that is owed to God (*religio est quae Deo debitum cultum affert*). Because the exercise of this virtue is so closely concerned with offering what is due to God Thomas considers the possibility that this virtue might be placed among those virtues which are essentially concerned with our relationship to God; perhaps the virtue of religion is a theological virtue. Thomas takes up a sentence from Augustine: '*God is worshipped by faith, hope and charity*' [Augustine *Enchiridion* 3. PL 40, 232]; since the worship of God lies at the heart of the virtue of religion, then perhaps it too must be placed among the theological virtues.

Thomas describes the theological virtues as virtues that have as their object the being of God. In the offering of worship to God Thomas says that there are two elements to be considered: there is that which religion offers to God, worship itself, and there is the person to whom the worship is offered, God. The acts of worship do not touch God directly, they have God as their end not as their object; the acts of the theological virtues do touch God directly, they have God as their object. The worship of God relates to God in the sense that acts of worship are performed out of reverence for God not in the sense that they attain God. Thomas draws out the distinction between powers or virtues

whose object is an end and powers and virtues which are concerned with the means to an end; those whose object is an end are said to command those which are concerned with the means to an end. The theological virtues have God as their proper object. The theological virtues, by commanding, cause religion, which is concerned with an means to an end, to be directed to God, who is the object of the theological virtues. (2a. 2ae. q. 81 a. 5 ad. 1) It is because of this capacity of the theological virtues to command worship, which Thomas locates among the acts of religion, that Augustine could say that God is worshipped by faith, hope and charity. Religion is not therefore to be placed among the theological virtues (2a. 2ae. q. 81 a.5). Instead, religion is a moral virtue, a part of the moral virtue of justice (2a. 2ae. q.81 a.5 ad.3)

Not only is religion a moral virtue it is, says Thomas, the most important of the moral virtues. In examining the place of religion as a moral virtue among the other moral virtues Thomas has recourse to the terms of the precepts of the Decalogue. Thomas maintains that these precepts of the Decalogue are themselves concerned with the practice of virtue. Because in the order in which the precepts of the Decalogue are offered those precepts which are concerned with the practice of religion are located in the first part of the Decalogue then the virtue which is governed by these precepts, the virtue of religion, is more important or is the chief of all the moral virtues (2a. 2ae. q.81 a.6).

How does Thomas believe that this virtue can be exercised? The virtue of religion must, for Thomas, have two elements, external acts and internal acts because the practice of religion is for our benefit and not for the benefit of God. For our minds to be moved to the perfecting subjection to God which is achieved in worship our minds need to be led by God as we encounter and make use of the material things of the universe through which the hidden God is shown to us. The exercise of the virtue of religion is not for the benefit of God. Human beings cannot add anything to God as we honour and give reverence to God; but rather we offer such honour and reverence to God so that, as our minds are subjected to God by these acts, we ourselves grow towards perfection, perfection which is itself subjection to God. The need to honour and reverence God is our need not God's need. The internal acts of religion are of greater significance than the external acts. The external acts of religion are subordinate and secondary to these inner acts. Thomas says that the worship of God in spirit is the most important, the most essential element in the worship of God. External signs are offered to God as we honour and reverence God but they are simply signs of the internal and spiritual reverence which is acceptable to God.

Religion has a particular relationship to sanctity; for Thomas religion and sanctity are the same thing in reality although they may be distinguished one from the other by reason. Sanctity (*sanctitas*) may be said to mean two things. Sanctity has to do with purity (*munditia*), with being unsoiled; thus

the term had been used in this manner to talk about those things which had been purified by the sprinkling of blood. Sanctity has to do with 'being firm'; thus the term was applied to those things which had been made strong, secure and inviolate by the terms of a law. The term sanctity, bearing both of these senses, may be applied to those things which are involved in divine worship, the human beings engaged in worship and those things which human beings make use of in their acts of worship. In worship the mind may be said to be withdrawn from lower beings, from the less perfect things in life, so that the mind might be united to God, whose being is supreme. Without sanctity the mind cannot be devoted to God as it should. The possession of sanctity indicates that a human being directs his attention to God; and this is essentially the same as the work of the virtue of religion and of the work of the acts of that virtue.

Does Thomas place the virtue of religion among the acquired moral virtues or among the infused moral virtues?

Thomas makes a distinction between acquired moral virtues and infused moral virtues. Acquired moral virtues may arise and grow in us because of our own actions. Infused moral virtues cannot be acquired by human actions, they are given to us, infused in us, by God; these infused moral virtues are given to us to accompany the gift of the infused theological virtues. The question we take up here is this: in the *Summa* does Thomas place the virtue of religion among

the acquired moral virtues or among the infused moral virtues? What is the burden of our question? If what Thomas has to say in the *Summa* about religion is said about an acquired virtue then it may be reasonable to expect that all human beings might be able to acquire and to live out this virtue; but if what is said about religion in the *Summa* is said by Thomas about an infused moral virtue then the demands set out in this treatment of the virtue can only reasonably be applied to those who have received the infused theological virtues and who are then given the infused moral virtue of religion to accompany the living out of the infused theological virtues? Unfortunately Thomas does not ask this question directly in the *Summa*.

How then do the commentators whose work we have opened up earlier approach this question?

Etienne Gilson (1957) maintains that when Thomas in the *Summa* writes about virtue and, particularly here about religion, he is writing about infused, supernatural virtues and not about acquired virtues. For Gilson, Thomas does admit that there are natural acquired virtues and that there is a natural acquired virtue of religion. For Gilson, however, what Thomas is addressing in the *Summa* is not the world of natural virtue but is the world of the Christian in which divine grace has been given and in which divine grace has poured into the human person the infused moral virtues.

Thomas O'Meara does not offer us a treatment of the virtue of religion in such a manner that he is able to present a solution to our question about the nature of this virtue. But O'Meara's approach to what Thomas has to say is helpful for us in this task. O'Meara (1997) approaches the *Summa* as a work about the work of grace in nature. 'Two realms compose one existence for human beings; creation and grace are distinct but not separate'. Aquinas, he says, intended them to 'meet and live in intimacy' (1997, p.81). O'Meara presents what Thomas has to say in the *Summa* in terms of grace building on nature: 'Later.. we will see how worship, holiness, ministry, and politics unfold within grace building upon nature' (1997, p. 81). He presents what Thomas has to say as 'explorations by a Christian theology of that horizon of reality called the "supernatural order" (1997, 83). He does not say that nature and grace are one in Thomas but rather that nature and grace work with each other in Thomas. 'Aquinas kept the orders of being and grace distinct as he showed how grace and humanity are not disparate or mutually hostile ' (1997, 104). None the less, says O'Meara, in the *Summa*, when Thomas is concerned with human life and its workings he is concerned with the workings of grace in the human person: 'A theology of the human being as the image of God concludes the First Part and serves as a bridge to the graced anthropology of the Second Part' (1997, 107). O'Meara reads the *Pars Secunda* of the *Summa* as a study of the interplay between the powers of human personality and the work of grace; it is an account of the means by which human beings, living in the Spirit of God, journey to their destiny. O'Meara opens up what he thinks of

as a 'graced psychology' which becomes a 'moral theology, which Thomas presents in the *Pars Secunda*. This moral theology is spelled out in terms of a theology of the virtues, virtues which are all in this place Christian virtues; and all of these virtues are pervaded by grace and by love, and in the light of love the whole of the *Pars Secunda* is to be read. O'Meara points to the way in which this life of love is enriched by the giving of the gifts of God. The clear implication of what O'Meara has to say about the whole nature of the *Summa* and about the *Pars Secunda* of the *Summa* is that Thomas is treating the virtue of religion as a part of the life of the Christian living in the power of the Holy Spirit of God, touched by grace and by love.

Stephen Pope likewise says that the ethic Thomas offers in the *Summa* is wholeheartedly a theological ethic; that what Thomas says in the *Secunda Pars* is not, and was not intended to be, a self contained moral theory written in the manner of a moral philosopher but is an essential part of a theological system. (Pope, 2002,31).

Jean Porter maintains that the virtue of religion which Thomas is considering is the infused virtue of religion not an acquired virtue of religion. Porter writes:

'At the same time, throughout his discussion of religion, Aquinas treats it as an infused virtue; that is to say, he assumes that true religion will be grounded in grace and guided in its expressions by the theological virtues above all by charity' (in Pope, 2002, p.279).

Porter points to two texts in the *Summa* (one of which we have already considered and the second of which we consider when we approach the treatment God gives to the internal virtues of religion) which give support to her reading (2a.2ae.q.81 a.5 ad. 1 and 2a.2ae. q. 82.a.2)

Alone among the recent commentators we have drawn upon, Fergus Kerr (2002) seems to locate the offering of worship, which creatures owe to God as creator, among the natural and not the supernatural virtues, that is among the acquired and not the infused virtues. Thus Kerr writes:

‘The practices which display the natural virtue of religion (as he considers it to be) came under the cardinal virtue of justice, as rendering what is due: in this case, the debt of worship which creatures owe to God as creator’ (2002, p.166).

What is not entirely safe for us to propose is that when Thomas is speaking about the virtue of religion he is clearly speaking about an infused moral virtue; Thomas simply does not say this. What is safe for us to suggest is that when Thomas considers the virtue of religion he is doing so in the context of his own awareness of the existence and the real workings of the theological virtues. It is not safe for us to lift out the virtue of religion from its place in the architecture of the *Summa* and to disregard the way in which Thomas places his treatment of the virtue of religion after and in the context of his treatment of the theological virtues.



What Thomas has to say about religion and about the demands of religion on the life of human beings has clear application to those who live the Christian life, to those who live out the workings of the theological virtues in them. Thus the requirements to offer prayer and worship to God that Thomas sets out in his account of the virtue of religion do clearly apply to those who live in this manner. All of what Thomas has to say in the Summa about religion and the requirement it lays on human beings to offer prayer and worship to God cannot properly and with certainty be laid on all human beings who live without the workings of the theological virtues in them, who do not have in them infused theological virtues and moral virtues which, infused or acquired, are lived out without the workings of the theological virtues in them.

#### The internal acts of religion

Thomas ascribes both internal and external acts to the virtue of religion and both internal and external acts to the worship of God (2a. 2ae. q.81 a.7).

The internal acts of religion, which Thomas believes to be the essential and principal acts of religion are devotion and prayer. Thomas makes what he calls 'devotion' the first internal act of religion. Devotion is an act of the will through which we offer ourselves urgently to the service of God (2a. 2ae. q.82 a.1).

Devotion is very firmly placed among the acts of the moral virtue of religion. That being said it may also be said that acts of devotion are in some sense acts of the theological virtue of charity. In the practice of devotion a person gives

themselves to God and such giving is achieved primarily through charity; devotion might even be said to be an act of the virtue of charity not an act of the virtue religion. But, says Thomas, although the giving of oneself directly to God and the holding fast to that giving is an act of charity not religion, acts of the worship of God are acts of the virtue of religion. Charity may still guide the giving of worship.

'Through charity man immediately gives himself to God, cleaving to him in spiritual union. But man gives himself to works of divine worship immediately through religion, and mediately through charity, which is the principle of religion (*quae est religionis principium*)' (2a. 2ae. q. 82 a. 2 ad. 1).

This offering of ourselves for the service of God, devotion, is brought about in us by two causes, says Thomas. In the first place, devotion is caused in us by God: 'God is the extrinsic and principal cause of devotion' (2a. 2ae. q.82 a.3). In the second place devotion is brought about in us by contemplation or meditation: 'Clearly, however, the intrinsic or human cause of devotion is contemplation or meditation' (2a. 2ae. q.82 a.3). Through the exercise of meditation devotion is brought about in us as we consider and conceive of the idea of giving ourselves to the service of God. In meditation we can consider the goodness and kindness of God; this leads us to the love of God and so to devotion to God. In meditation we can also consider our own weakness before God; this leads us to submit ourselves to God and so we are led to again to devotion to God (2a. 2ae. q. 82 a. 3). Because meditation can lead us to a consideration of the love of God, meditation can lead us to joy; because

meditation can lead us to a consideration of our own weakness we can also be led to sorrow before God (2a. 2ae. q. 82 a.4).

Thomas makes prayer the second interior act of the virtue of religion. Thomas offers a very extensive exploration of prayer as an act of the virtue of religion. Thomas has one central image for what prayer is like. As Thomas asks whether or not prayer is an act of our appetitive power (or instead whether it is an act of our cognitive power) he points to what he sees to be at the heart of prayer.

‘In the present context, we are considering prayer as a request or petition; this is the primary meaning of prayer because as Augustine says, *prayer is petition* (Augustine *De Verb Dom.* Cf Rhabanus Maurus, *De Univ.* VI, 14.PL 136) , and as Damascene states, *to pray is to ask fitting things from God* (John Damascene *De Fide Orthod.* 24.PG. 94, 1089).

Thomas asks: ‘*Utrum sit conveniens orare*’ (2a. 2ae. q.83 a.2). The term ‘*conveniens*’ might be translated here ‘useful’, ‘fitting’, ‘expedient’, ‘appropriate’ or, even, ‘becoming’. Thomas considers the notion that prayer is not useful. On this account prayer is not useful or necessary because God already knows our needs and therefore there is no value in telling God what God already knows. Moreover, prayer is not fitting because it looks like an attempt to change the mind of a God who is unchangeable. So Thomas turns to the invitation to pray that he finds in the Gospels: ‘*We ought to pray and not lose heart*, as it says in *Luke* (Luke 18,1).’ On the back of this Gospel invitation Thomas urges the appropriateness or necessity of offering

petitionary prayer to God. He picks out what he regards as three mistakes about the possibility of offering truly useful, appropriate prayer to a truly provident God. These mistakes, he says, have already been fully addressed in the *Prima Pars*. These mistakes take the following form. There are those who have no belief in the providence of God; for those who have no such belief prayer to God is useless. There are those who believe that everything that does happen and that is going to happen has already been determined, and so, on this account, prayer is also useless. There are those who believe that prayer and worship offered to God are appropriate to offer because God's mind is so ever changeable that there is no true divine providence. In each of these mistaken points of view those who have urged them destroy either the real usefulness of prayer or the real providential care of God for God's creation. Thomas defends the usefulness and appropriateness of prayer offered to God, reminding us of what he has already established about how prayer works.

‘For we do not pray in order to change the decree of divine providence, rather we pray in order to impetrate those things which God has determined would be obtained only through our prayers’ (2a. 2ae.q.83.a2).

Thomas makes the offering to God of acts of prayer, acts of reverence and subjection before God, acts of the virtue of religion (2a. 2ae. q.83 a.3). Thomas considers the necessity of our offering prayer to God. He considers this objection.

‘Moreover, worship is necessary by necessity of precept. Prayer, however, is not a matter of precept because it flows from a spontaneous will and is nothing other than a petition for things we desire.’ (2a. 2ae. q. 83 a. 3).

Thomas offers a reply to this objection thus:

‘To ask for what we desire and to desire the proper things are matters of precept. To desire the correct things falls under the precept of charity, but to ask for them falls under the precept of religion. This precept is stated in *Matthew* (Matthew 7,7) *Ask and you shall receive*’ (2a. 2ae. q.83 a.3 ad.2).

Thomas also affirms the validity of offering prayer not only to God but also to the angels and saints. He defends the appropriateness of praying to God in definite, determined terms and the rightness of praying to God for temporal goods. He defends the value of praying for ourselves and for others even for those who are our enemies and he explores the rightness of the terms of the Lord’s Prayer as an act of prayer.

Thomas opens up a fascinating question concerning the matter of who or what may pray: ‘*Utrum orare sit proprium rationalis creaturae*’. He reserves the making of prayer to rational creatures.

‘Prayer is an act of reason by which a superior is petitioned, just as command is an act of reason by which an inferior is directed to something. Therefore, one who has reason and a superior whom he is able to beseech is able to pray. Nothing is superior to the divine persons, and dumb animals do not have reason; hence the divine persons and dumb animals do not pray.’ (2a.2ae. q. 83 a.10).

Thomas takes up the notion that perhaps as human beings can pray so God also can pray.

‘Apparently, prayer is not reserved to rational creatures. Asking and receiving seem to apply to the same subject. Now to receive applies to uncreated persons, namely to the Son and the Holy Spirit. Therefore it pertains to them to pray also: thus, the Son said, *I will ask my Father* (John 14, 16), and St Paul says of the Holy Spirit, *The Spirit asketh for us* (Romans 8,26)’.

But Thomas rejects this proposal.

‘The divine persons are said to receive by reason of their nature, but prayer is an act of one who receives through grace. The Son is said to ask or to pray according to his assumed nature, that is, not according to his divine nature but according to his human nature. The Holy Spirit is said to ask because he prompts us to ask’. (2a, 2ae. q. 83 a. 10 ad. 1).

The Psalms talk about animals calling on God: ‘Who gives food to the cattle and young ravens that call upon him (Psalm 146,9)’. Thus, it might be said that animals can pray to God. But Thomas has said that animals, lacking reason, cannot pray. Animals might still be said to call upon God, though not to pray.

‘The young ravens are said to call upon God because of the natural desire whereby all things, each in his own way, seek to attain the divine goodness. Thus, even dumb animals are said to obey God because of the natural instinct by which God moves them’ (2a. 2ae. q.10 a.10 ad.3).

Human beings beyond death can pray: the saints in heaven pray and, indeed, they pray for us. Non human rational creatures also can and do pray, for the angels of God are said to pray to God.

Thomas asks whether or not acts of prayer need to be made aloud. He looks at the various forms of prayer and the value of these various forms of prayer. Thomas makes a distinction between common prayer and individual prayer.

Common prayer is the form of prayer which is made by ministers of the Church who pray to God representing all of the people of God. This form of prayer ought to be made aloud so that the people for whom that prayer is offered may know the prayer which is offered for them. Individual prayer is prayer made by a single person praying for themselves or for others. Now this prayer does not need to be vocal prayer. However, it is rightly made vocally on some occasions and this for three possible reasons. First, the making of a prayer aloud can stimulate the devotion of the person who is making the prayer. Second, says Thomas, prayer may be made vocally to enable us to pay a debt to God:

‘The voice is employed in individual prayer in order to pay a debt, for man ought to serve God with all that he has received from him, not only with the mind, but also with the body. This is especially true of prayer in so far as it renders satisfaction’. (2a. 2ae. q.83 a.13).

Here we have a notable statement of the sense in which making prayer is paying a debt and in which it is the making of satisfaction. The third reason why individual prayer may be made vocally is not because of something which ought to happen but because of something which does happen; in prayer when the one making the prayer is overcome with intense affection this quite naturally flows over from the soul into the body.

Thomas explores the idea that attention is required of us in prayer. He unpacks the question very carefully. He makes it clear that he is asking principally about the making of vocal prayer although he does open the issue

of being attentive in contemplative prayer. He opens up two ways in which something might be said to be necessary for vocal prayer. First, it might be necessary because the end to be achieved in prayer is better attained if the prayer is made with attention; if this is the case then attention in prayer is absolutely necessary. Second, it might be necessary because without such attention prayer is not able to obtain the effect it seeks. Thomas makes a distinction between what he sees to be the three effects of prayer. Thus the first effect of prayer is the attaining of merit, the second effect is the obtaining of what we pray for and the third is the refreshment of the soul of the one who prays. The first effect is one shared in common with all acts which are directed by charity; for this effect to be brought about it is sufficient that the act is driven by charity alone and, for this reason, attention is not necessary for this effect to be attained. The second effect is brought about solely by the original intention of the prayer offered before God; attention is not necessary for this effect to come about. The third effect of prayer, spiritual refreshment comes about at once as the prayer is made and so, for this effect to come about attention in prayer is necessary. Thomas suggests that attention is necessary in the offering of prayer so that the one making the prayer may attain the end of that prayer and likewise that attention in prayer is necessary if the one making prayer is to find spiritual refreshment in that prayer.

However, for Thomas, there is not just one form of attention which might be necessary in prayer, there are three forms of attention which might be so



required. Attention in prayer may be asked of us as we are attentive to the words of prayer, as we are attentive to the meaning of those words and as we are attentive to the end to be attained, that is God and to that matter for which we are praying. For Thomas, attentiveness to God and to the matters for which we are praying is that attention which is most necessary and also the attentiveness which is most easily attained. Thomas recognises the difficulty of being attentive in prayer but still, he says, when we allow ourselves, deliberately, to lose such attentiveness in prayer then we are indeed committing a sin and we are taking away the possibility of that prayer achieving the effect which is desired in that prayer.

Thomas considers the notion that prayer should be prolonged (2a. 2ae. q. 83 a.14). For Thomas, prayer can be spoken about in itself and in its cause. First, prayer may be spoken about in terms of the cause of prayer: 'The cause of prayer is the desire of charity, and this desire ought to be with us continually, either actually or virtually'. The desire for prayer is virtually present in all our actions which we do out of charity. The doing of all such actions which arise out of charity is done for the glory of God.

'In this sense prayer ought to be continual, and hence Augustine says, *Faith, hope and charity are a prayer of continual longing*' (Augustine *Ad Probam* CXXX,9.PL 33,501)'.

Second, prayer may be spoken about in itself. Now here prayer may not be continual for the simple matter of fact that we cannot always praying, we must

do other things in life. Prayer is properly considered as a continual act in the sense that where charity (and indeed where faith and hope) is present prayer is being made and so a continual prayer is being made. There is a necessity for this continual act of prayer to be offered. The living of a continual life of prayer is the result of our living a life of charity; it is a way of understanding the demands of the Christian life within which we live in faith and hope and charity. Prayer is also properly a particular act done over a certain period of time, done alongside other particular acts which are themselves done over a particular period of time. It is necessary for us to offer such particular times of prayer although we cannot always be doing so for we have other things to do and to say.

Thomas considers the value of prayer when he examines the notion that prayer may be meritorious. As Thomas affirms the value of prayer, as he proposes that prayer is indeed meritorious he reminds us of what he already said about the threefold effect of prayer: prayer has the effect of bringing us spiritual consolation, the power of obtaining what we ask for and the power of bringing merit to us. Prayer has the effect of bringing us merit because prayer proceeds from charity, which is the principle of prayer itself. Thomas draws together prayer, religion, faith and charity in the body of this article.

‘Prayer proceeds from charity through the virtue of religion of which it is an act, as we have stated above (2a. 2ae. q.83 a.13) and with the concurrence of the other virtues required for the value of prayer, namely humility and faith’ (2a. 2ae. q. 83 a.15).

Prayer must be seen in the context of the world of grace; prayer derives its effectiveness from the work of grace in us. Prayer must also be seen in the context of the gift of faith:

‘Prayer is based upon faith, not for its effectiveness in meriting, because in this regard it is based principally upon charity, but rather for its effectiveness as impetration’ (2a. 2ae. q. 83 a. 15 ad. 3).

Prayer is not always effective. For prayer to be effective it must meet four conditions; it is necessary for us

‘to ask for oneself, to ask for things necessary for salvation, to ask piously, and to ask perseveringly; if these four conditions concur we always obtain what we pray for’ (2a. 2ae. q. 83 a. 15 ad. 2).

### The external acts of religion

Over the space of eight questions in the *Secunda Secundae* Thomas considers what he considers to be the external acts of religion.

Thomas says that the first external act of religion is adoration. Thomas uses the term ‘adoration’ to refer to the set of actions through which we offer reverence to the one we adore; it involves, in some measure the use of our bodies to offer such reverence (2a. 2ae. q.84 a.1). In adoration there is an inner and an outer reverencing of God; the outer reverencing is the sign of the inner reverencing of God. It is because human beings are both spiritual and

corporeal beings that we can offer to God a twofold adoration, spiritual adoration, which is the inner devotion of our minds and bodily adoration, which is the outer humbling of our bodies. The inner spiritual adoration is of greater importance than the outer bodily adoration and it is itself the reason why the outer bodily adoration is offered (2a. 2ae. q.84 a.2). Adoration is the offering of reverence to the one who is adored and reverence is due to God (2a. 2ae. q.84 a.1).

The second external acts of religion is, for Thomas, a set of acts in which we offer external things to God. Thus we offer sacrifice to God, we make offerings to God, we pay tithes, and we make vows to God. I shall only consider here the making of sacrifice, for the making of sacrifice does relate to the whole matter of offering worship to God, or at least it does in the treatment offered by Thomas. In the making of a sacrifice to God we make use of outer things offering them to God as a sign of subjection and honour (2a. 2ae. q. 85 a.1). Sacrifice has an inner aspect, the offering to God of the soul itself; sacrifice has an outer aspect, the offering to God of an outer sign of this inner offering (2a. 2ae. q.85 a. 2) The offering of a sacrifice is to be related to the goods human beings seek. When we offer the inward sacrifice to God which is devotion or prayer or any other inward sacrifice we do so in a manner which will be for the good of our soul. When we offer to God 'martyrdom, abstinence or continence' we do so for the good of our soul. When we offer to God external things we are offering directly to God a

sacrifice for the good which we may find in these external things (2a. 2ae.q.85 a.3 ad.1) What sorts of things does Thomas call a sacrifice? When we perform any virtuous act, which is virtuous in itself, and when we direct that act so that it offers reverence to God, then the performance of that act is an act of sacrifice. In this sense the acts of any virtue may be said to be a sacrifice. When we perform an act, which may of itself be morally indifferent, purely for the reverence of God then this act is also said to be an act of sacrifice (2a. 2ae. q.85 a.3); this act is a sacrifice in the proper sense. Thomas examines the notion that the activity of offering of a sacrifice to God in some way is a part of what the natural law requires (2a. 2ae. q.85 a.1). He argues that from natural reason human beings know that we are subject to some superior being; this being we call God. From a dictate of natural reason we are naturally inclined to offer honour and submission to a superior being in a manner which is appropriate for ourselves as human beings to offer. As human beings it is appropriate for ourselves that we offer this honour and submission through sensible signs. Thus natural reason dictates that we should use sensible signs in our offering of honour and submission to this superior being; and to do this is precisely for us to offer sacrifice. And so the offering of sacrifice is in some way governed by natural law. Thomas asks: 'Are all obliged to offer sacrifice?' (2a. 2ae. q. 85 a.4) Thomas argues that since all are obliged to follow the natural law, all are obliged to offer sacrifice. He proposes that internal sacrifice is demanded of all, 'to this all are held since all are held to offer a devout mind to God'. He asks then whether external sacrifice is

demanded of all? . He draws together the obligation to offer sacrifice with the demands of the natural law and the divine positive law. For Thomas external sacrifice can be considered in two ways. First, there is the offering of external sacrifice which is said to be good 'only because something is offered as a sign or protestation of subjection to God'. The offering of sacrifice considered in this way lays different obligations on human beings depending on whether a person lives according to the law of God, both Old or New, or not. Those who live according to the law of God, Old or New, are bound to offer sacrifice to God according to the precepts set out in the law of God. Those who do not live under the law of God are still to offer sacrifice to God but now only according to the manner set out according to the custom of their own people. Second, there is the offering of sacrifice which happens when the external acts of any virtue are themselves performed out of reverence for God. Now the offering of sacrifice according to this manner may either be required of all by some or other precept which binds the exercise of that virtue, or it may not be required of us at all but may be offered by us as an act of supererogation.

The third of the external acts of religion for Thomas is the set of acts in which we make use of divine things; we make use of the sacraments and we make use of the name of God. Thomas considers the way in which we can make use of the name of God when we are making prayer and when we are praising God. Thomas asks two questions about using the name of God in the making

of prayer: 'Should we praise God vocally?' and 'Should songs be used when praising God?' (2a. 2ae. q. 91) Thomas proposes that vocal prayer is offered of necessity. For Thomas, the making of such vocal prayer is necessary not because God needs it but only because we need it for ourselves and for others as a means of bringing us all to God (2a. 2ae. q. 91 a.1). And, asks Thomas, is it necessary to sing our praises to God? There is no necessity to sing our praise of God, he says, but singing may be useful to arouse a strong devotion to God and, because of this, it may be wise so to offer our praise of God not only in words but also in song.

### Vice and religion

As Thomas considers each of the virtues he also considers the vices which can accompany these virtues. Thomas offers an very extensive treatment, nine whole questions in all, of what he consider to be the vices which are to be associated with the virtue of religion.

Thomas considers two forms of vice which he associates with the virtue of religion. First there are those vices which are opposed to religion and its virtuous exercise but which are still directed to some form of divine worship. Second, there are those vices which show which are opposed to fundamental elements of divine worship and which are totally opposed to the virtue of religion.

The exercise of the virtue of religion, according to Thomas, involves devotion and prayer, adoration, sacrifice and the making of offerings to God as well as the payment of tithes and making of vows to God; it also involves the making proper use of divine things, the sacraments and the very name of God in the praise of God. It might seem reasonable to expect that when Thomas considers the vices associated with religion that he would offer some comment on the lack of devotion, or the lack of prayer, or the lack of adoration or the lack of sacrifices offered to God or the lack of praise offered to God and the name of God. It is strange that the extensive treatment Thomas offers of these vices associated with religion is so little concerned with the lack of devotion, prayer, adoration, sacrifice or praise. Since Thomas does see the offering of the internal and the external acts of religion in terms of the offering to God of what is due to God, and since the offering of devotion, prayer, adoration, sacrifice or praise to God are what is largely at stake here, we might well expect to see Thomas commenting on the lack of any of these due acts in his treatment of the vices associated with religion; it is at least somewhat odd that Thomas says nothing at this point about the simple failure to offer to God these due acts.

Given this level of silence about the failure to offer the due acts of religion in this treatment of the vices associated with the virtue of religion, I shall look relatively briefly at the treatment Thomas gives to these vices.



There are vices which are opposed to religion and its virtuous exercise but which are still directed to some form of divine worship. Thomas considers these vices as parts of the one vice which is superstition. Thomas considers the notion of superstition itself. For Thomas, we fail to exercise a moral virtue when we fail to achieve the mean standing between two possible ways of acting; we fail to exercise this virtue either when we fail to do enough towards the fulfilment of that virtue or when we do too much towards the exercise of that virtue. Thomas describes superstition in these terms: superstition is a vice opposed to the virtue of religion; it is a vice in which we seek to offer too much rather than not enough; it is a vice not because we seek therein to offer too much worship to God but rather because in what we do we seek to offer this worship to beings other than God, beings who do not deserve such worship (2a. 2ae. q. 92 a.1). The first form of superstition may involve the offering of worship to God but the offering of this worship in some inappropriate manner. It is possible for us to offer worship to God in a way in which we do not represent and further truth in the performance of that worship. Thus it is now inappropriate for us to continue to offer worship according to the Old Law since the coming of Christ and the redemptive work done by Christ.

‘For instance, now that Christ, the Messiah, has come and redeemed us, it would be wrong to use the ceremonies of the Old Law in which the mysteries of God were foreshadowed as things to come, just as it would be to profess that Christ had still to die on the cross’ (2a. 2ae. q.93.a.1).

It is also possible for us to offer worship in an inappropriate and excessive manner when we offer worship to God which does not serve to glorify God nor to raise our mind to God; it is possible thereby to offer external worship which is not true internal worship. We may offer such false worship when we do not offer worship which is harmony with the law of God, the rules of the Church or the customs of those with whom we live (2a. 2ae. q.93 a.2). The second form of superstition comes about when we offer worship which is at heart idolatry. Idolatry involves the making of worship to anything to which we should not be giving worship. Thomas remarks here:

‘Just as religion is not the same as faith, but a confession of faith by outward signs, so superstition is a profession of unbelief by outward signs of religion’ (2a. 2ae. q. 94 a. 1 ad. 1).

Offering worship to something which is not God, whether we do by internal or external acts, is sinful. But even worse, idolatry might in some manner be considered in itself to be one of the most grievous of sins.

‘Is it not the worst crime in an earthly commonwealth to acknowledge as its head one who does not have this position, for this upsets the whole public order? And so, among sins committed against god, which are the greater sins, is it not the greatest to treat a creature as God, for this sets up another god in the universe, and diminishes divine sovereignty’ (2a. 2ae. q. 94 a. 3).

Thomas examines a number of other forms of superstition, divination, magic and fortune-telling; these considerations do not help us further with our study of prayer and worship.

There are vices which are opposed to fundamental elements of divine worship and which are totally opposed to the virtue of religion (2a. 2ae. qq. 97 to 100). Thus, Thomas examines the attempts we might make to tempt God, and next he examines perjury and finally simony as sins against religion. For the very greatest part the attention Thomas gives to these sins does not take us any further with our consideration of those vices which are opposed to that part of the virtue of religion which is the offering of prayer and worship to God.

Thomas considers what he believes to be the sinful act of tempting God. Thomas considers tempting God is a sin directed against the virtue of religion. This sin may be committed in two ways. First, we can offer true prayer to God but we can also use our prayer to test God in a manner which amounts to tempting God, and so, of sinning against God.

‘And so we can conclude by saying that when a man in his prayers and deeds entrusts himself to divine assistance in his needs, this is not to tempt God... But when this is done without necessity or usefulness, this is to be construed as tempting God’ (2a. 2ae. q.97 a.1).

Second, we can commit such a sin if we do not prepare ourselves for prayer in an appropriate manner. Thomas writes:

‘A man who does not prepare himself for prayer by forgiving those against whom he has anything, or by not otherwise disposing himself, does not do what he can for God to listen to him, and he can be construed as tempting God’ (2a. 2ae. q. 97 a.3 ad. 2).

## Prayer and worship, law and virtue

Thomas draws together virtue and law. For each of the virtues, Thomas maintains, that there is a set of precepts which is to be associated in some fashion with that virtue. The virtue of justice is that virtue which directs human beings one to another. The precepts of law which are contained within the Decalogue, says Thomas, direct human behaviour towards the relationships we have one to another; therefore, these precepts all involve the exercise of the virtue of justice. The Decalogue occupies a very significant place in law itself; its demands are particularly evident to natural reason.

‘The Ten Commandments are the primary precepts in all law, and natural reason gives immediate assent to them as being plainly evident principles’ (2a. 2ae. q. 122 a. 1).

The notion of precept has within it some sense of duty, some notion of indebtedness. The virtue of justice likewise has within itself a note of duty, of indebtedness. The precepts contained within the Decalogue, which are the primary precepts of all law, relate by necessity to the virtue of justice.

The first three precepts of the Decalogue Thomas relates to the exercise of the virtue of religion, which is itself the most important part of justice (2a. 2ae. q.122 a.1) The function of law itself is to make human beings good. The order in which laws are proposed needs to follow the order in which human beings come to be good. For this reason the pattern of laws within Decalogue follows the pattern or order in which human beings become good;

relatedness to God is the foundation for human beings becoming good, becoming virtuous, so the Decalogue sets out first those precepts which direct us to the good which involve the exercise of religion.

‘This is why for one who was to be built up in virtue through law, it was necessary to lay as it were a foundation, namely the virtue of religion, whereby a person is set in proper relationship to God, who is the final end of man’s will’ (2a. 2ae. q. 122 a. 2).

Thomas believes that human beings are to grow in virtue by means of the exercise of law. Human beings are to be built up in relatedness to God, by the exercise of the virtue of religion and by means of the demands set before us by the first three precepts of the Decalogue.

Thomas makes the first two commandments of the Decalogue clear the way for the exercise of true religion, for the offering of true worship of God. The first Commandment directs human beings to abandon devotion to false gods; in this way it clears a pathway for the exercise of the virtue of religion in the true worship of God (2a. 2ae. q. 122 a. 2). The second Commandment likewise clears a way for the exercise of true religion. Thus this second Commandment removes both that excessive deference to God, which is superstition, and the failure to show that reverence to God, which is irreligion, and so makes possible the true worship of God (2a. 2ae. q. 122 a. 3).

The third Commandment establishes us in the way of true religion; it does this by demanding worship of us as we keep holy the sabbath day. Worship has

both outward and inward elements. We are led to true interior worship not by law but by the action of God on us directly. We are led to true outward worship by this the third of the Commandments.

‘Since with regard to the worship of the heart which is made up of prayer and devotion, man is led more by the promptings of the Holy Spirit, a commandment needed to be given with regard to outward worship in terms of some external sign’ (2a. 2ae. q. 122 a. 4).

True outward worship of God is proposed in this Commandment in terms of the law requiring the observance of the sabbath; the observance of the sabbath becomes the external sign which directs us to the true outward worship of God. The sabbath is a gift, God’s ‘most general benefaction towards man’ (2a. 2ae. q.122 a. 4). The sabbath represents God’s work of creation and his resting from that work on the seventh day; as a symbol of this seventh day this Commandment orders that the day to be kept holy, to be devoted wholly to God.

It might seem that this third Commandment should not be included within the Decalogue. The Decalogue lays down spiritual and moral precepts; it does not lay down ceremonial precepts. The third Commandment might seem to be concerned with purely ceremonial precepts and, if it were, it might not be appropriate to see it as a part of the Decalogue. However, Thomas defends the inclusion of the third Commandment in the Decalogue. When the commandment is read literally it has both a moral and a ceremonial sense. When it is read in its allegorical and its anagogical senses it is to be read as a

ceremonial precept. This Commandment only appears in the Decalogue in so far as it has a moral and not in so far as it has a ceremonial sense. When read in its moral sense it demands only that human beings should set aside some time to concentrate on God and the things of God. Human beings need to set aside time for physical refreshment; in the same manner human beings need and are disposed to set aside time for spiritual refreshment.

‘Wherefore it is in accord with a dictate of natural reason that a man should reserve some time for spiritual nourishment whereby his spirit is fed on God’ (2a. 2ae. q. 122 a. 4 ad. 1).

### **PRAYER, WORSHIP, VIRTUE AND GIFT IN THE *SUMMA***

Apart from the virtues Thomas presents us with three other sources of goodness which direct human beings to the good: the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the beatitudes and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Having devoted thirteen questions to the virtues in general Thomas gives one question only, in the *Prima Secundae*, to each of these other intrinsic sources of goodness in the human person. I shall look, very briefly, at what Thomas has to say about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and then at what Thomas has to say about a gift of piety.

Thomas proposes a list of the so-called 'gifts' of the Holy Spirit, (1a 2ae. q.68): wisdom, knowledge, understanding, counsel, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord. The gifts are 'perfections of man, whereby he is disposed so as to be

amenable to the promptings of God' (1a. 2ae. q.68 a. 2) and operate in man to 'perfect the soul's powers in relation to the Holy Ghost their Mover' (1a.2ae. q. 68 a 8). Thomas asks are these not simply virtues. He reflects, at some length, on the controversies which he sees in the history of Christian theology which concern the relationship between the virtues and these gifts. For Thomas these gifts, which are infused in the human person by God (1a.2ae. q.68 a. 1) are indeed to be distinguished from the virtues; unlike even the theological virtues which are like the gifts infused in man the gifts 'may be defined as something given by God in relation to his motion, something to wit that makes man to follow well the promptings of God' (1a.2ae. q.68 ad. 3). Among these gifts is the gift of piety.

Corresponding to the whole virtue of justice, a demand made on man, Thomas proposes that there is also a gift, the gift of piety. This gift is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In considering the virtues he annexed to the virtue of justice Thomas has already considered the virtue of piety: 'it belongs to piety to give worship to one's parents and to one's country' (2a. 2ae. q.101 a.1). But the gift of piety is not the virtue of piety: 'the piety that pays duty and worship to a father in the flesh is a virtue: but the piety that is a gift pays this to God the Father' (2a.2ae. q. 121 a.1 ad. 1). Piety as a gift enables the human person to pay worship and duty to God as Father.

'It follows that piety, whereby at the Holy Ghost's instigation, we pay worship and duty to God as our Father, is a gift of the Holy Ghost'. (2a.2ae. q.121 a.1).



And now, very particularly, Thomas indicates that this gift of piety adds something to the virtue of religion.

'To pay worship to God, as Creator, as religion does, is more excellent than to pay worship to one's father in the flesh as piety that is a virtue does. But to pay worship to God as Father is yet more excellent than to pay worship to God as Creator and Lord. Wherefore religion is greater than the virtue of piety: while the gift of piety is greater than that of religion' (2a.2ae. q.121 a. 1 ad. 2).

Religion as a virtue becomes the virtue of paying due worship to God as Creator and Lord. But to pay worship to God as Father is dependent not only on the moral virtue of religion but also on the gift of the Holy Spirit of piety; this worship of God as Father is greater than the worship of God as Creator and Lord.

#### Prayer and worship and virtues and vices relating only to certain people

In the final part of the *Secunda Secundae* Thomas considers the particular virtues and vices which relate to some human beings only; the differences between human beings here depends on the particular dispositions and on the particular activities of particular human beings. The first way in which some human beings differ from others is by way of charisms or particular graces (*gratias gratis data*). We do not need to take this up in this study. The second way in which human beings differ arises from the distinction which is made between the life of action and the life of contemplation. The third way

in which human beings differ arises from the particular offices or states of life which human beings take up.

Thomas explores the different demands of a life given over to action and a life given over to contemplation. Thomas recognises that some human beings are called to live a life of contemplation and dedicate themselves to this work, while others are called to the active life and dedicate themselves instead to this work. (2a.2ae. q.179). In this context Thomas says some interesting things about prayer. It is often said that when Thomas talks about prayer he is talking about petition. I am sure that it is indeed the case that petition plays a central role in the understanding Thomas has of the life of prayer. But does prayer have any relationship to contemplation in the mind of Thomas?

Thomas explores the nature of contemplation (2a.2ae.q.180). Contemplation is a movement both of the intellect and the will. Contemplation is the pure love of God, a gazing on the beauty of God and it is delight; it approaches that which is truth and so that which is desirable, loveable and delightful (2a.2ae. q.180 a.1). Prayer has a part to play in contemplation. Thomas raises the question of whether or not there are various activities in the contemplative life. What is stake here for Thomas is the maintenance of the unity of the life of contemplation. The objection is offered that prayer, reading and meditation are part of the contemplative life; so there is not one activity within this life and so there is no true unity in this life. Thomas proposes instead that the end

to which contemplation moves is one thing , the simple contemplation of the truth, but that to achieve this one simple end several activities are needed. For human beings to receive that truth from God, which is the end of contemplation, prayer is needed. Prayer takes its place among the activities which are necessary for the human person to move to that one simple end, which is the enjoyment of contemplation (2a.2ae. q.180 a.3). For those who are called to contemplation, prayer is necessary for them to achieve that end to which they are called.

Human beings differ because of the offices or states of life which they take up. Some human beings take up the life of a vowed religious. Thomas takes up the matter of the nature of the religious life itself. He asks whether religious life is itself a state of perfection. And in so doing he moves to define the religious life itself. Thomas takes up the meaning of the term ‘religion’ which he had earlier defined in the *Summa* and applies this to the very meaning of being a religious. And he writes thus:

‘Religion is a virtue by which one offers something for the service and worship of God. Therefore they are called religious antonomastically who consecrate themselves totally to divine service, offering themselves as a holocaust to God’ (2a.2ae. q.186 a.1).

When human beings take up the particular life of the religious they are bound by the vows they take. For some of those who take up a vowed religious life there are demands laid on them to pray, and this demand is a particular demand laid on them as individuals as a part of their vowed religious life

(2a.2ae. q.186 a.7). Religious may be bound, as a matter of obligation, by the demands of their vowed life to offer the prayer to God which is celebrated in the canonical office. Beyond these demands of required prayer the religious cannot claim that they are so bound to a life of prayer, in a way in which the lay members of the Church are not, that they can avoid the doing of daily manual labour by the claim that they must pray (2a.2ae. q.187 a.3). There is a requirement to offer prayer laid on those who live the religious life in terms of their celebration of the daily canonical office, but there is no greater demand on them to offer private than there is upon all the members of the Church.

### **PRAYER, WORSHIP, CHRISTOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS IN THE SUMMA**

What Thomas has to say in the *Pars Tertia* of the *Summa Theologiae* concerning the person and the work of Jesus and the place of the sacraments instituted by Jesus has some relevance for my study, for both in his Christology and in his sacramental theology Thomas makes reference to the place of worship and prayer.

Thomas speaks of the work of Christ as the work of a mediator. He draws together two strands; first, the sense in which Christ brings demands and gifts

to us from God and, second, the sense in which Christ brings our prayer to God.

'It belongs to Him as man, to unite men to God, by communicating to men both precepts and gifts, and by offering satisfaction and prayers to God for men. And therefore He is most truly called Mediator' (3a. q. 26 a. 2).

Prayer and worship are acts of virtue, the virtue of religion. Thomas believes that in Christ all the virtues apart from faith or hope are to be found (3a. q. 7 a.2). We might have expected the virtue of religion to appear in his account of the virtues which were in Christ; Thomas speaks, however, only of the virtues of liberality, magnanimity, temperance and continence when he considers the virtues in Christ. However much significance he gives to the virtue of religion in the *Secunda Secundae* when he chooses which of the virtues of Christ to consider, the virtue of religion does not make an appearance.

We have seen that piety as a gift is given to us to perfect our worship. In Christ the gifts of the Spirit were present in a most excellent degree (3a. q.7 a. 5). But Thomas gives us here no account of the ways in which the particular gifts were given to Christ; thus he offers no indication as to any particular senses in which the gift of piety was present in Christ.

Thomas considers the prayer which Jesus as he ministered before the Father as a priest (3a. qq. 20-22). Christ himself does quite properly pray . Thus

Thomas asks 'Whether it is becoming to Christ to pray' and believing that it is so becoming, he remarks:

'Because the Divine and the human wills are distinct in Christ, and the human will of itself is not efficacious enough to do what it wishes, except by Divine power, hence to pray belongs to Christ as man and having a human will' (3a. q. 21 a. 1).

But what is the purpose of this prayer made by Christ?

'Being both God and man, He wished to send up prayers to the Father not as though he were incompetent, but for our instruction. First that he might show Himself to be from the Father; second, to give us an example of prayer' (3a. q. 21 a. 1 ad.1).

We have seen that Thomas places among the acts of religion the offering of sacrifice. The suffering of Christ is for Thomas an act of sacrifice. Thomas asks 'whether Christ's passion operated by way of sacrifice' and answers:

'A sacrifice properly so called is something done for that honour which is properly due to God, in order to appease Him. It is manifest that Christ's passion was a true sacrifice' (3a. q. 48 a.3).

While Thomas does not speak of the passion of Christ as an act of the virtue of religion, it is proper for us to place alongside each other the terms in which Thomas speaks of sacrifice as an act of the virtue of religion, an act of offering what is due to God, and the language he uses here of the passion of Christ as itself the offering to God of a sacrifice which is properly due to him.

We have already seen the ways in which Thomas understands the relationship between worship and the demands of law. Thomas draws together the demands made by law concerning worship with the work, and especially with

the death, of Christ. Thomas asks, 'Whether Christ died out of obedience' and replies:

'Yet because the Old Law was ended by Christ's death, according to his dying words, It is consummated, (John 19/30), it may be understood that by His suffering He fulfilled all the precepts of the Old Law. He fulfilled those of the moral order which are founded on the precepts of charity, in as much as He suffered both out of love of the Father..and out of love of His neighbour. Christ likewise by His passion fulfilled the ceremonial precepts of the Law, which are chiefly ordained for sacrifices and oblations, in so far as all the ancient sacrifices were figures of that true sacrifice which the dying Christ offered for us' (3a. q. 47 a.2 ad. 1).

The, unfinished, account Thomas gives of the theology of the sacraments occupies a large part of this *Pars Tertia* of the *Summa* ; here again we find Thomas addressing the offering of worship. What, for Thomas, is the nature and purpose of these sacraments?

'The sacraments of the Church were instituted for a twofold purpose: namely, in order to perfect man in things pertaining to the worship of God according to the religion of Christian life, and to be a remedy against the defects caused by sin.' (3a. q. 65 a. 1).

His understanding of the Christian sacraments brings together the sacraments, the worship of God, the perfecting of that worship and the perfecting of man by that worship, and the needs of religion.

The sacraments, as sensible signs which perfect worship, are signs of spiritual activity, which thereby belong quite properly to true worship and to the needs of the establishing of the kingdom of God. The sacraments do have a proper

and constant place in true Christian worship. However, the forms of sacramental life have not been constant throughout human history.

'As Augustine says (*Contra Faust* xix) diverse sacraments suit different times..Consequently, just as under the state of the Law of nature man was moved by inward instinct and without any outward law, to worship God, so also the sensible things to be employed in the worship of God were determined by inward instinct. But later on it became necessary for a law to be given (to man) from without: both because the law of nature had become obscured by man's sins; and in order to signify more expressly the grace of Christ, by which the human race is sanctified. And hence the need for those things to be determinate, of which men have to make use in the sacraments' (3a. q.60 a.5 ad. 3).

Human beings, in this account, have an instinct within them by the law of nature to worship God and they likewise have an instinct as to how they are to offer this worship. The particular demands and forms of the Christian sacraments are to be related both to providing forms of worship which accord with our natural instincts, the real nature of which had become less clear, and to providing forms of worship which more properly express the life Christian live in the grace of Christ.

We have seen already the way in which Thomas interprets the work of Christ, and especially his passion, according to the concept of sacrifice. Now he draws this understanding into his account of the sacraments and he does so in a way which also draws in talk of religion, and specifically of Christian religion. He asks 'Whether the sacraments of the New Law derive their power from Christ's Passion' and answers:



'Now sacramental grace seems to be ordained principally to two things: namely, to take away the defects consequent on past sins..and further to perfect the soul in things pertaining to Divine Worship in regard to the Christian Religion...by his Passion he inaugurated the Rites of the Christian Religion by offering Himself - an oblation and a sacrifice to God. Wherefore it is manifest that the sacraments of the Church derive their power specially from Christ's Passion, the virtue of which is in a manner united to us by our receiving the sacraments' (3a. q. 62. a. 5).

Thomas draws together the Christian sacraments, the work of offering worship and the priestly nature of Christians themselves. The Christian is given the task of offering a spiritual service to God. Because of this the Christian is given a spiritual character to enable them to offer this service to God (3a. q. 63 a. 2). This character given to us by the sacraments, which gives us the task of worshipping God is itself dependent on the nature of Christ and his own priesthood (3a. q.63 a.3). All members of the Church share in the priestly task of offering worship:

'In a sacramental character Christ's faithful have a share in his priesthood; in the sense that as Christ has the full power of a spiritual priesthood, so His faithful are likened to Him by sharing a certain spiritual power with regard to the sacraments and to things pertaining to divine worship' (3a. q.63 a.5).

Human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

I have offered an account of what Thomas has to say in the *Summa* about the life of prayer and worship. Within this account I have asked the question 'Are

human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?' I have now shown how we can derive a firm, positive and extensive answer to this question from Thomas.

The answer we can derive from Thomas is a very complex, many-sided answer. Thus we have shown that this positive answer needs to be set out using at least the notion of law, virtue, justice and religion and, but through and within these notions, the notion of doing what is a matter of ones duty to God. Each of these terms contains within itself a reference to the activities of offering prayer and worship and to the notion that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

The treatment given by Thomas to the term law contains within itself the consideration of a whole set of forms of law and the making of prayer and worship according to the demands of these forms of law. Thomas lays down a requirement, on all of us or on some of us, that we are to offer prayer and worship to God, and he lays this down within the demands of natural law, divine positive ceremonial law (within the context of the demands of the Hebrew Bible) and divine positive moral law (within the terms of the whole of Holy Scripture).

The treatment given by Thomas to the term virtue contains within itself, and significantly for us, a consideration of virtue itself and of the many forms of

virtue. Thomas lays down a requirement, on all of us or on some of us, that we are to offer prayer and worship and he lays this down within the demands of the life of virtue. Thomas lays down a requirement on all of us or some of us that we are to offer prayer and worship and he lays this down within the demands of the virtue of religion.

Thomas makes the offering of prayer and worship more than a matter of demand. As we have seen, Thomas maintains that the task of making prayer and worship is supported and sustained by a direct gift from God, the gift (not the virtue) of piety, by the work Jesus has done and still does and by the power and grace the sacraments afford us.

I do have some difficulty establishing whether Thomas lays this requirement, within the terms I have opened up, on all of us or on some of us. This difficulty depends on the difficulty I have with what Thomas has to say about the demands of law and what he has to say about the virtue of religion. Certainly Thomas maintains that all human beings are required by natural law to offer worship and prayer to God. However, when we take up what Thomas has to say about this requirement in terms of natural law, it is not evident that the reading of the demands of natural law in relationship to prayer is really a pure natural law demand, which might be laid successfully on all human beings, which can be stated without engaging in divine positive law, which actually appeals to those beyond the confines of the Church in which such

divine positive law is venerated and accepted, which appeals to those who either do not know or do not accept the terms of that divine positive law. It is not safe for us to apply the terms of what Thomas has to say about natural law, prayer and worship beyond the bounds of those who embrace the divine positive law, since the principal systematic part of what Thomas has to say about the specific demands of natural law concerning prayer and worship occurs within and is coloured by his treatment of the demands of divine positive law.

As I have shown, when Thomas advances the notion that there is a virtue, the virtue of religion, which binds us to this requirement, it is not at all clear if Thomas is addressing all human beings, who can develop an acquired moral virtue, the possession of which might we might be expected, required, to develop, or is addressing those within the life of the Church who are given the theological virtues and who are also given the infused virtue of religion.

It is not easy to see how, on the basis of what Thomas has to say about law or virtue, we can reliably lay this requirement on all human beings, although we have sufficient ground for affirming that Thomas lays this requirement firmly and richly on all members of the Church.

Two principal elements of prayer and worship are clearly required of members of the Church who live according to the terms of the positive law of

God and within the life of the virtue of religion. First, there is the inner spirit, the inner particular acts, devotion; these are to be offered to God. Second, there is the external worship, the particular acts of external worship; these are to be offered to God.

Among the major commentators on Thomas that I have opened up, there is no direct and systematic approach to laying out the question we have asked. Nowhere do I find the offering of an answer to our question, a treatment of the topic of the required nature of prayer and worship, set out in the terms used by Thomas, that is, in terms of law, virtue, justice and religion. Given my account of what Thomas can be drawn out to say, and to say extensively, about my question, I would urge that there is a need to insert the treatment of my question, answered in the terms of Thomas, into statements of the whole moral philosophy and the moral theology of Thomas.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### **TOWARDS NOT BEING REQUIRED TO OFFER PRAYER AND WORSHIP TO GOD**

I am now going to jump forward from the approach to prayer and worship we find in Thomas to the approach to prayer and worship we find in Immanuel Kant.

Before I make the jump from Thomas to Kant it is worthwhile taking a look at what other philosophers before Kant did to this question. In particular, given my concern to explore in this study not only Catholic but also Anglican answers to our question, I have chosen to take a brief look at British philosophers from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, to see what they have to say about prayer and worship and to take notice of the affirmative answers they offered to our question. It will also serve my purposes well, before arriving at Kant, to see how David Hume offered an estimation of the value of prayer and worship entirely other than the one we see presented by these philosophers.

In the major part of this chapter I shall consider the answer, the essentially negative answer, to be found in Immanuel Kant. I shall offer an engagement both with present day commentators on the work of Kant and with some of the central texts in which Kant approaches the making of prayer and worship to God. Moving from Kant's negative answer to Feuerbach's negative answer I shall look very briefly at what Hegel has to say about worship. Finally I shall consider, and this briefly, two examples of how twentieth century thinkers express a negative answer to our central question.

A major part of the historical journey I take in this chapter runs alongside J.B.Schneewind's magnificent study *The invention of autonomy: A history of modern moral philosophy* (1998). The earlier parts of the chapter might also be seen to run in parallel with Stephen Darwall's *The British moralists and the internal 'ought': 1640-1740* (1995). In neither of these texts, however, is there an engagement with the terms of my central question.

### British philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in the *De Religione Laici* of 1645 (1944) claims to derive the notion from human reason that all human beings are required to offer worship to God. We can discover, he says, by examining the faculties of the soul what religion demands of us. From here we come to the knowledge of universal doctrines, knowable by all at all times and in all places, which he calls the 'catholic truths'. Among these truths, knowable to all, at all times, is

the truth that there is a God, a supreme being, and this supreme being ought to be worshipped.

Thomas Hobbes in both *The Elements of Natural Law and Politic* of 1640 and the *Leviathan* of 1651 gives us ample evidence of the need he saw for human beings to offer prayer and worship to God.

In the *Leviathan* (1968), Hobbes says that human reason proposes its own laws for human beings and human societies about the honour and worship to be shown to God. Worship offered to human beings has an end; it is directed to power. The worship given to God, which Hobbes maintains is our duty to offer, is to be considered quite differently.

'But God has no Ends: the worship we do him, proceeds from our duty, and is directed according to our capacity, by those rules of Honour, that Reason dictateth to be done by the weak to the more potent men, in hope of benefit, for fear of damage, or in thankfulness for good already received from them' (1968, p.401).

What is required of us? The light of nature teaches us to worship God by word and by action. These actions of worship must express 'a most generall Precept of Reason, that they be signes of the Intention to Honour God' (1968, p.403). We are offer prayers, thanksgiving, and the gifts of sacrifices and offerings. We are to offer only the best prayers, thanksgivings, offerings and sacrifices to God. We are to worship God not only in secret but also in public. The greatest worship we can offer is to obey the laws of God.



'For as Obedience is more acceptable to God than Sacrifice; so also to set light by his Commandements, is the greatest of all contumelies' (1968, p.405).

Worship must be offered by the society, the commonwealth; in this worship unity is above all required of us.

'But seeing a Common-wealth is but one Person, it ought also to exhibite to God but one Worship; which then it doth, when it commandeth it to be exhibited by Private men, Publiquely' (1968, p.405).

Where diversity in public worship exists there is no true public worship at all, for public worship can only be one worship offered by one commonwealth. All of this worship is demanded of us by the light of nature itself. In the Christian commonwealth the law of God governs the behaviour of all members of that community; that is it directs the behaviour of the governors of that community and of all its members (1968, p.414). Opposed to the Christian commonwealth is a kingdom of darkness (1968, pp. 627-628). In this kingdom of darkness there is false worship; the worship of idols. The worship of idols, forbidden by the second of the Commandments, is the failure to give due honour to God, giving this honour instead to creatures, to man-made images or to phantasms, the products of human imagination. Hobbes finds examples of idolatry in the worship of the 'Gentiles', the worship of the gods of the classical world. He finds examples of such idolatry just as clearly in the practice of worship of the Church of Rome (1968, pp.675-681). Since so many of these practices of worship in the Church of Rome may be said to be idolatrous, they may be excluded from the worship of a Christian

commonwealth; and their exclusion will serve to establish more completely the uniformity of worship which is demanded if there is to be true public worship in the England of his time.

Henry More's *Enchiridion Ethicum* (1930) published in Latin in 1666 appeared in English translation in 1690. It offers us a clear statement of the requirement laid on human beings to offer prayer and worship to God. More makes the offering of prayer and worship activities established on the foundations of 'right reason'.

More believes that the human iniquities can only be overcome by the consideration of virtue (1930, p. A2). He is clear that true virtue may be found only 'by Faith in God and a Reverence to his Holy Scriptures.' (1930, p. A2) Equally clearly he believes this way of finding virtue has become impossible and that now we must approach true virtue only by recourse to human reason. What is virtue itself, is that which seems best to right reason. This right reason in the human soul is itself a copy of the divine reason (1930, p. 15). The eternal law is made known to us through Right Reason and it calls for our obedience. Virtue is the doing of that which right reason sees to be best; it is the doing of that which is 'obligatory, and of Duty, and according to a Law which was immutable' (1930, p.15).

More believes that there are principles, 'Moral Noemas', which arise out of the mind, which are immediately and irresistibly true and which need no proof; moral reason may proceed in part by making reference to these principles. He establishes a set of principles to guide the acquisition of the virtues and which relate to the doing of our duties to God and to our fellow human beings. All of these latter rules and principles are, in some part, rules and principles of piety, governing how we are to relate to God. More insists that piety has a proper place among the virtues: 'For I account Piety among the Moral Virtues, inasmuch as God may by the Light of Nature be known' (1930, p.25).

More explores the place of the passions in the moral life. The passions are significant for the moral life; they are good and they are necessary for the perfecting of human life. (1930, p.41) The passions need to be used rightly and according to the ends which have been placed within them by God; they have within them a voice of nature which may be heard and which needs to guide their use. (1930, pp.54-55). Our relationship to God has a place among the passions. More sees five passions as being in some way primary or 'primitive': love, hatred, joy, grief and cupidity. The passion of devotion is a species of the passion love. Devotion directs our lives to God and to religious life.

'By Devotion we are taught, as by a loud Exhortation of Nature, to believe that there is something which ought to be more dear to us than our selves, and for which we should not scruple to lay down our Lives. The Use therefore of this Passion refers chiefly to Polity and Religion;

neither of which can be without Virtue. So that for the Use of this Passion we are accountable to our Prince, our Country, and to our Religion: That is to say, unto God and true Virtue' (1930, p.62).

More divides the passions and the virtues into primary ('primitive') and secondary ('derivative') virtues; to the virtues he adds a number of 'reductive' virtues which may be reduced to the derivative virtues. The virtue of justice is a derivative virtue. The virtue of justice contains the virtue of piety:

'For Piety it self is a sort of Justice, by which we render to God the thing which is God's; that is to say, the thing which of Right appertaineth to him.' (1930, p.117).

The exercise of piety demands that we worship God: 'And this Right of God's is very commonly term'd Worship' (1930.p117). Human beings are required to offer worship:

'These are God's Rights; and he that dares to derogate from them, or to infringe them, does as much as in him lies defraud and injure God himself' (1930, p.117).

To honour God, to worship him, is at once to seek to preserve the likeness of God within us and to renounce all things which can weaken or destroy that image of God. The cultivation of virtue is the manifestation of the worship of God (1930. p120). The offering of adoration to God is God's right; it is an immutable and everlasting right. (1930, p.121).

'Wherefore the Sum of all natural Religion seems to consist in that Precept of Antoninus, To remember God, and to know that he abhors all Hypocrisie, and will not be servd but with what is rational and like to himself'. (1930, p.121).

Whatever else is asked of us it is the striving to live a life of virtue which must direct our worship.

'For there may be various Ceremonies, and other Circumstances of Divine Worship, which, in Virtue of a Law, may be establish'd as of Divine Right, and such as may not be violated, till by Legal Authority they are revok'd. But still these must have no Repugnancy in them, either to the Oracles of God, or to the supreme Laws of Virtue.' (1930, p.121).

Impiety, the lack of due worship, may involve 'Superstition, Profaneness, Enthusiasm and Rituality' (1930, p.122). In superstition we fail to offer worship to God because we accord undue reverence to something which is not God. In 'profaneness' we fail to offer true worship to God by violating God's rights through 'impudence and imprudence' (1930, p.122). Enthusiasm and rituality present two extremes of failure to offer God the worship due to him. In enthusiasm we fail to worship God because we offer only internal and spiritual worship; in ritualism we fail to worship God because we offer only external or ceremonial worship and fail to offer internal or spiritual worship to God.

For More prayer is an effective means for the acquiring of virtue. Human beings ought to be ready, and indeed unashamed, to pray to God for virtue and accept such virtue as a gift from God. To seek virtue without in prayer seeking the help of God is ineffective:

'For we dare Affirm, that whoever pretends to Virtue, without Imploring it at God's Hand, will only catch the empty Shadow thereof.' (1930, p.205).

More believes that prayer is a proper part of ethics: 'Nor must any Man wonder, that we annex Prayers unto Moral Philosophy; since we have already made Piety an Essential part thereof' (1930, p.205). More suggests that we should offer short and frequent prayer to God for prayer in this form is most efficacious in our acquiring virtue (1930, p.207). Among the principles which guide the acquisition of the virtues More considers how piety can be acquired. Piety will advance so far as we acknowledge the goodness God shows to us. We need to offer public worship and private inner devotion to God.

'Yet as to the manner of Worship, let this be a Rule to all, that we so adhere to God's outward and publick Service; as not to omit our inward and private Devotions; which are certainly the dearest Part.' (1930, p.214).

External worship is demanded of us. The growth in virtue, as the growth in likeness to God is true internal worship.

'For Virtue, which is true and rais'd up to Perfection, and which becomes thereby the Image of God, is certainly God's best Worship. Yet this Inward Gift never contends against those Rites and Forms in Religion, that are decent and establisht by Law' (1930, p.215).

John Locke offers an account of how prayer and worship may be said to be matters governed by the absolute freedom of conscience of each individual while they are also matters laid on all human beings as a matter of requirement.

Locke explores some of the forms that religion can take in his *A Letter on Toleration* of 1689 (1968). For Locke, the purpose of religion is to regulate the lives of human beings 'in accordance with virtue and piety'. (1968, p.59) He establishes a distinction between the business of religion and the business of the state. Standing apart from the civil power is the life of religion, the life of the Church.

'A Church seems to me to be a free society of men, joining together of their own accord for the public worship of God in such a manner as they believe will be acceptable to the Deity for the salvation of their souls' (1968, p.71).

For Locke it is the case that all human beings know and indeed acknowledge God ought to be worshipped, and not only worshipped but worshipped in public (1968, p. 101). We are all required to enter a society within which God may be worshipped.

'Men endowed with this liberty must therefore enter some religious society, in order to hold public services, not only for mutual edification, but to testify to the world that they are worshippers of God and offer to his Divine Majesty such service as they themselves are not ashamed of, and such as they think not unworthy of him, nor acceptable to him' (1968, p.101).

In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, first published in 1690, and published in a revised form in 1706 Locke proposes: 'That *God is to be worshipped* is, without doubt, as great a truth as any can enter the mind of man and deserves the first place among all practical principles' (1965, p.45-46).

Locke's major concern in the first book of the *Essay* is to demonstrate that there are no innate principles, speculative or practical, in the human mind. For Locke even the principle 'that God is to be worshipped', first among principles, is not an innate principle. Although Locke denies that the principle 'God is to be worshipped' is innate he allows that this principle might be a true principle. Though the knowledge we can have of either God or of worship is not innate, once we do gain knowledge of God and worship we will accept that God is to be worshipped.

'Everyone that has a true *idea* of *God* and *worship* will assent to this proposition, that God is to be worshipped, when expressed in a language he understands' (1965, p.54).

Locke's concern in *The Reasonableness of Christianity* of 1695 (2002) is to demonstrate the reasonableness of Christianity when Christian faith is compared with the Jewish faith and with the faith of the pagan Gentiles. Locke argues that human beings always had the capacity to arrive at a true knowledge of God and at a true worship of God but that they did not do so; the true worship of God was made known to human beings in the Old Law, to some extent, and in the law given by Jesus and found in the New Testament. Locke proposes that the worship of God is a necessary and a required element of a human life well lived; the worship which is called forth from human beings is an 'obligation of the heart', a worship 'in spirit and in truth' which still demands, none the less, some element of outer public worship for that worship to be complete.



True belief in God and the true worship of God was held and enacted by the people of Israel. The law which God gave to Israel, ceremonial and moral requires perfect obedience. The ceremonial law, which governs outward worship establishes only limited and temporary obligations, and these by express positive injunctions given by God. What is the nature of the way of the Christian? It is 'an obligation of the heart'. This obligation of the heart, our dependence on God and our affection for God, is 'the most acceptable Tribute we can pay him, the foundation of true Devotion; and Life of all Religion' (2002, p.187). Jesus did not command obedience to the ceremonial law.. Worship was in sore need of reform.

'Stately Buildings, costly Ornaments, peculiar and uncouth Habits, and a numerous huddle of pompous, fantastical, cumbersome Ceremonies, every where attended divine worship'. (2002, p.201).

Jesus offered a reformation of worship, promising us new worship, a worship in spirit and in truth. The greatest part of the outward forms of worship are no longer necessary. If all that is necessary for worship is that we worship in spirit and in truth, is there any need for the ceremonies of religion? Locke maintains, there still remains a need for public worship, 'where some Actions must lie open to the view of the World' (2002, p. 202). But now all that is needed in worship is 'decency, order and edification'. Many of the outward appearances and the ceremonies of religion are no longer needed, and we should no longer be 'solicitous about useless ceremonies'. What is now needed?

'Praises and Prayer, humbly offered up to the Deity, was the Worship he now demanded; And in these every one was to look after his own Heart, And to know that it was that alone which God had regard to, and accepted' (2002, p.202).

In *The Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy* of 1747 (1969a) Francis Hutcheson offers a consideration of human nature and its parts and powers, the nature of the supreme good, and the nature of virtue. Hutcheson chooses to divide the virtues in a way he thinks is more obvious and natural than any other way of doing so, to divide the virtues according to the objects towards to whom the virtues are to be exercised. Thus the virtues are directed to and concern our duties to God, to other human beings and to ourselves.

There is an 'inward sense of the heart' which shows us that God ought to be praised. Our recognition of the power, the goodness and the wisdom of God shows us that God ought to be 'acknowledged with the most grateful affections, with generous love, and highest praises and thanksgiving' (1969a, p.73). All rational creatures who seek to cultivate their own higher powers and to achieve moral excellence are drawn to love God. The natural expressions of the human soul express themselves in and are strengthened by our inner relationship to God:

'... the good man must naturally incline to employ himself frequently and at stated times in some acts of devotion, contemplating and adoring the divine excellencies; giving thanks for his goodness; humbly imploring the pardon of his transgressions; expressing his submission, resignation, and trust in God's Providence; and imploring his aid in the acquisition of virtue, and in reforming his temper, that he may be furnished for every good work' (1969a, p.76).

Worship must be external and public as well as internal. The inner affections of the human soul seek to express themselves in public; such expression increases our devotion and enables others to partake in this 'sublime enjoyment' (1969a, p.77). What exactly is demanded of us?

'The external worship must be the natural expressions of the internal devotion of the soul; and must therefore consist in celebrating the praises of God, and displaying his perfections to others; in thanksgivings, and expressions of our trust in him; in acknowledging his power, his universal Providence and goodness, by prayers for what we need; in confessing our sins, and imploring his mercy; and finally in committing ourselves entirely to his conduct, government, and correction, with absolute resignation.' (1969a, pp78-79).

We are to realise, at the same time, that whatever piety or worship is offered to God it is for our benefit and not at all for the benefit of God (1969a, p.76).

In *A System of Moral Philosophy* of 1755 (1969b) Hutcheson considers the duties we have to God, to form just and appropriate sentiments about God and to exercise the proper affections and the proper worship of the God. The worship which is demanded of us is both external and internal worship. Internal worship is a matter of duty. Hutcheson speaks of the duty we have to 'entertain and cultivate, by frequent meditation, the highest admiration of that immensely great original Being , from which all others are derived' (1969b, p.210); External worship the natural expression of internal worship is demanded of us. There is a need for external worship for this strengthens and deepens internal worship. External worship is our duty; by such worship we are able to promote virtue and happiness among others and we are able to

offer to society the piety which is its strongest defence against evil. (1969b, pp.217-218) This worship expresses itself in a number of forms: we will naturally offer praise and thanksgiving to God, we will confess our sins to God and we will ask God for his pardon and his help.

Butler's *The Analogy of Religion* of 1736 (1906) attempts to demonstrate the essential reasonableness of Christian faith by showing how this faith accords with what we know of the workings of Nature. Butler sets out an account of the relationship between the demands of natural and revealed religion. He pays attention to ways in which it may be said that human beings in general and Christians, in particular, are required to worship God.

Religion is given internal and external parts by Butler. The internal part of religion has elements and demands that are drawn from natural religion; to these are added elements and demands which are drawn from revealed religion. Natural religion here directs us to have religious regard for God as the Almighty Father; revealed religion directs us to have such religious regard for the Son and the Holy Spirit. The internal regard we are to have for God, Father, Son or Spirit is immediately given to us once the nature of our relationship to each of the divine persons is discerned or received. (1906, p.127). Our religious duties to each of the divine persons arises immediately from the very nature of their 'offices and relations' to us. From the nature of

the relationship of the Son and the Spirit to us it is evident that we are to pay them 'reverence, honour, love, trust, gratitude, fear, hope' (1906, p.128).

What is required of us in our external worship of the divine persons? The knowledge we have of the particular demands of external worship of the Son and the Spirit are made known to us by revelation; so indeed may be the particular demands made on us to worship the Father:

'In what external manner this inward worship is to be expressed is a matter of pure revealed command; as perhaps the external manner in which God the Father is to be worshipped may be more so than we are ready to think' (1906, p.128).

External worship of God is a moral duty, although the form that worship takes is not matter of moral duty. The moral law, written in the human heart, is to be valued more highly than the positive institutions of Christian religious life. Human beings have always tended to attempt to make their particular positive rites in some way equivalent to obedience to moral precepts; but the nature of these things in themselves shows us that to make such an equivalence is 'subversive of true religion' (1906, p.133). The teachings of Jesus make it clear that the moral is to be preferred to the positive institution.

'And by delivering his authoritative determination in a proverbial manner of expression, he has made it general: I will have mercy and not sacrifice (Matthew 9/13; 12/7)' (1906, p.133).

Jesus declares here the nature of the 'general spirit of religion': 'that it consists in moral piety and virtue, as distinguished from forms, and ritual observances' (1906, p.134).

In Richard Price's *A Review of the Principal Questions In Morals* of 1758 (1948) there is an exploration of 'some of the most important Branches of virtue or heads of rectitude and duty' (1948, p.138). The first among these branches of virtue is said to be our duty to God. It is our duty to show to God the 'subjection and homage we owe him'; this is 'indispensably obligatory' (1948, p.139). If we ask anyone who is a 'pious and of plain sense' why worship is to be offered to God we would find that he might say 'he obeyed and worshiped God, because it was right - because he apprehended it his duty' (1948, p.139). That we should offer 'submission, reverence, and devotion' to God is something which is an instance of 'immediate duty intuitively perceived' (1948, p.140). We are required to fix our 'strongest affection and admiration' on God and to direct our minds continually to God (1948, p.141).

'We ought to love him above all things, to throw open our minds, as much as possible, to his influence, and keep up a constant intercourse with him by prayer and devotion' (1948, p.142).

Thomas Reid's *Practical Ethics* of 1766 (1990) offers an account of ethics built around a consideration of the duties which are laid on us. We have duties towards God. We have a duty to offer God the appropriate 'affection of the heart'.

'The Duty to the Supreme Being consists in a Devout and Loyal Affection of the heart towards him corresponding to his Nature & the

relations we stand in to him. Love Esteem Veneration Gratitude Submission Obedience. External Religion.' (1990, p.117).

It is 'just and reasonable' that we should maintain a constant awareness of the presence of God with us. Asking God for his help and mercy is in some sense a matter of a 'kind of Instinct', an instinct implanted in us by God (1990, p.119). Reid rejects the view that piety and devotion are things only appropriate 'for the Entertainment of Monks and Old Women' and has no part in the life of virtue and honour for a 'Man in Active Life' (1990, p.123). Human beings have an obligation to be grateful to God. The exercise of piety and devotion strengthens virtue. Reid rejects the supposed exercise of virtue without piety.

'For these reasons I conceive that those who profess to be friends to Virtue while they hold in contempt Piety towards God, must either be hypocrites or very grossly deluded' (1990, p.124).

Not only individual human beings need to worship God, the state itself must be a place for the worship of God..

'Therefore that Nations as Such Should Honour God, by stated Acts of Devotion & Piety should implore his Blessing upon their Councils, his aid and Succour in publick Dangers and that they should humble themselves under his mighty hand by Supplications Repentance & Reformation when they are punished by publick Calamities' (1990, p.255).

David Hartley's *Observations on Man* of 1748 (1834) examines what Hartley terms 'theopathic affections': faith, fear, gratitude, hope, trust, resignation and love. He offers a set of rules which may guide the operation of these

theopathic affections. For Hartley the religious affections must be cultivated.

'There cannot be a more fatal delusion, than to suppose, that religion is nothing but divine philosophy in the soul; and that the foregoing theopathic affections may exist and flourish there, though they be not cultivated by devout exercises and expressions' (1834, p.528).

Prayer is a necessity because prayer is commanded in Holy Scripture which directs and command us 'to pray, to pray always, in every thing to give thanks'. (1834, p.529) The offering of public prayer and private prayer is a necessary duty. In public prayer human beings publicly profess obedience to God through Christ.

'We excite and are excited by others to fervency in devotion, and to Christian benevolence; and we have a claim to the promise of Christ to those who are assembled together in his name.' (1834, p.530).

### Seventeenth and eighteenth century devotional literature, prayer and worship

Alongside those seventeenth and eighteenth century British philosophers who pay attention to prayer and worship I lie, and this very briefly, the witness of English devotional literature in this time. Among the most significant and widely used pieces of devotional literature in this period is the anonymous work *The Whole Duty of Man*. Along with this there are at least two other works which take up the issues examined in this first text, the anonymous *The New Whole Duty of Man* and Henry Venn's *The Complete Duty of Man*. In these three works we are given a very distinct sense that the Christian is required to offer prayer and worship to God.



*The Whole Duty of Man* of 1657 (1739) offers an account of those matters which are laid on Christian believers as a matter of duty. Some duties are naturally knowable by all human being; among these duties lies our duty to worship God. We have a duty to honour God, a duty to pay God 'such a reverence and respect as belongs to so great a majesty' (1739, p.37). The writer considers the duty we have to worship God: 'this is that great duty by which especially we acknowledge His Godhead, worship being proper only to God, and therefore it is to be looked on as a most weighty duty.' (1739, p.96) Worship must be given to God by our souls and by our bodies. The worship to be given to God by our souls is prayer. The Christian is required to offer prayer, both public and private. Prayer honours human beings; 'it is a great honour for us poor worms of the earth to be allowed to speak so freely to the Majesty of Heaven' (1739, p.104). Prayer is a pleasure, the fountain of happiness: 'Prayer is a pleasant duty, but it is withal a spiritual one' (1739, p.106). In prayer we must ask in faith, with proper attention to our prayer, with zeal and earnestness and with purity. The duty to worship God by prayer, the worship of the soul, must be completed by the duty to worship God through worship offered by the body. God is to be worshipped by 'humble and reverent gestures' which express the inward reverence of the soul (1739, p.111). We are required to pay to God 'some tribute from our very bodies' (1739, p.111). When prayer is offered, and so that the worship of God

may be complete, it is to be offered 'with all lowliness as well as of body as of mind' (1739, p.111).

*The New Whole Duty of Man* (1788) sets out an account of morality in terms of the duties we owe to God, to our neighbour and to ourselves. The writer is particularly concerned with those who profess to engage in the practice of performing their duties but who fail to do their duties to God.(18).

The duties we have towards God are knowable through our reason, but revelation adds further, more particular and more secure statement of these duties.

'For, though natural light ascertains the being of a Deity, an shews us how reasonable it is to pay our adoration to that power, that created and preserves us; yet it does not sufficiently direct us in the way and manner of performing it' (1788, p.20).

Revealed religion gives new 'lustre and brightness' to the principles of religion known to us through natural reason. Christians have a duty to worship God; this is a duty we have in relationship to God alone; it is a duty which must be offered by the whole person, body and soul, in private and in public prayer (1788, p.162)

'Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that we should live in the constant exercise of prayer; and in so doing we cannot fail of attaining the end we aim at, our souls salvation' (1788, p.169).

Prayer is a necessity if we are to live virtuous lives: 'None can be virtuous that live without praying' (1788, p.169); and again, 'where there is no praying, there is no virtue' (1788, p.170). The duty to offer prayer to God is 'the most pleasant and delightful exercise of all the pleasures of the soul' (1788, p.172). Prayer is an expression of the sense of dependence which 'we owe to the Creator and Governor of the world' (1788, p.176). In worship we need to add to prayer, the worship of the soul, the worship of the body, for there is due to God a tribute of the body as well as the worship of the soul (1788, p.176).

Henry Venn introduces his *The Complete Duty of Man* (1798), recognizing the value of *The Whole Duty of Man*, but finding the earlier work lacking in an essential element of any work which seeks to promote holiness of living. What Venn believes to be lacking in *The Whole Duty of Man* and what he intends to emphasise in *The Complete Duty of Man* is what he sees to be a proper reference to the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. Helping to guide this work is a very firm attack on what Venn takes to be 'popish notions' that 'religious duties have in them an atoning virtue' (1798, p.177). Not only is the Christian to pray, the Christian is to pray constantly.

'So far therefore from thinking prayer a burden, or performing it as a mere duty, at particular times and seasons, the Christian may be said to "pray without ceasing" ' (1798, p.178).

The exercise of Christian devotion is indeed a matter of doing 'holy duties' (1798, p.179); it may not, even in the Christian, always be a matter of 'full

delight' but there is in the devotion of the Christian a real 'joy to praise and extol' God which may not be found in the life of 'natural man'. Prayer is necessary, first, because it is 'enforced by the most venerable persons' (1798, p.294), second, because it is a means by which grace is obtained, third, because God has commanded us to pray: 'The absolute necessity of prayer is put out of all doubt by the plain command of God. No man is left at liberty whether he will pray or no.' (1798, pp.296-297) The failure to pray is a failure to do our duty.

'To neglect prayer is actually to live in the commission of the basest theft, defrauding our God of his due, by refusing to render to him the tribute which he demands.' (1798, p.297).

To fail to meet this duty to pray to God is to fall into 'the most odious species of injustice' (1798, p.297). To fail to pray is to enter a place of great danger.

'The God of the Christians is a God jealous and terrible: jealous, not to allow his honour to be given to another, or denied to himself; terrible, to avenge himself of his adversaries, who withhold that homage which appertains to him as the Lord of the universe, in whom we live, and move, and have our being.' (1798, p.298)

What is needed for the exercise of true and effective prayer? First, prayer must have as its purpose the intention 'to observe and do what God commands' (1798, p.300). Second, such prayer must be humble. Third, such prayer must be accompanied in ourselves by a sense of our own vileness but also by a sense of trust in God and a boldness in the way in which we approach God in prayer. Fourth, prayer must be offered to God with a sense of the place of Jesus Christ in that prayer: 'I mean the offering it up to God in dependence on the sacrifice, righteousness, and intercession of Jesus, as the great High-priest of his church' (1798, p.303). To offer prayer without offering it in the name of Christ is a capital offence in the sight of God (1798, p.304). The true Christian believer will indeed offer true and effective prayer to God in private. The true believer will also worship God in public and they will see this as the doing of what is their duty to God.

'With the same spirit of true devotion they acknowledge it is their duty, and they make it their practice to worship God in public as well as in private; at church as well as in the closet: and in every ordinance in which God has promised to meet his faithful people, and to bless them (1798, pp.305-306).

## David Hume and the requirement to offer acts of prayer and worship to God

When we turn to David Hume the whole atmosphere changes. Hume seeks to take away our positive evaluation of the practices of prayer and worship.

Hume, in *The Natural History of Religion* of 1757 (1993) poses two questions concerning religion: 'What foundations in reason are there for religion itself?' and 'What are the origins in human nature of religion?'. Hume's first question he resolves at once. Religion is founded in reason because nature itself speaks to us of an intelligent author; a rational enquirer cannot doubt the primary principles of theism and religion. 'But the other question, concerning the origin of religion in human nature, admits of some more difficulty' (1993, p.134). Hume makes this second question the principal question for this work.

Hume traces his history of religion from 'about 1700 years ago' when, says Hume all human beings were idolaters. In those times of idolatry human beings exhibited a particular attitude to God 'the ignorant multitude must first entertain some groveling and familiar notion of superior powers'; only from there did they advance to the notion of a perfect being who gave order to the whole of nature (1993, p.135). Religion, which was itself idolatry, took its origins not from the contemplation of nature but from human fears about what

was to befall humankind. Relating to God in prayer and worship in the beginning was a matter of the performance of 'prayers, sacrifices, rites and ceremonies' and they became the source of the pouring of God's anger or God's favour on us (1993, p.139). Even when human beings began to believe in one supreme God, the maker of all things, human beings still lived in ignorance and stupidity in terms of how they were to relate to this God. Human beings treated God as they might treat an earthly ruler; thus they sought at every point to obtain God's favours by 'praise and flattery' and 'eulogy and exaggeration' (1993, p.155). So much so did human beings praise God by exaggeration that they endangered even their own understanding of God for by attempting to go beyond such an intelligent God with such extravagance of language they subverted the very bases of the rational worship or adoration of God. Even the attainment of the worship of one God did not protect worshippers from crude notions of God and from crude, vulgar and superstitious worship. It might have seemed to be the case that religious believers had now moved on from a vulgar understanding of God towards a sophisticated understanding of an infinite God. However they still held onto vulgar ideas of God and onto forms of worship which revealed such a vulgar understanding of God: 'Their real idea of him, notwithstanding their pompous language, is still as poor and frivolous as ever' (1993, p.157). Hume mocks the crudity of religious practice among those who profess to hold a pure and elevated doctrine of God.

In the history of religion human beings move back and forth between vulgar idolatry and pure theism. What seems to be pure faith gives rise to what Hume finds to be the most distressing acts of religion: 'the corruption of the best things gives rise to the worst' (1993, p.163). Here we witness Hume's real distaste for the actions which seem to flow from the profession of a faith in which the deity is thought to be a being infinitely superior to human beings.

'When the deity is represented as infinitely superior to mankind, this belief, tho' altogether just, is apt, when joined with superstitious terrors, to sink the human mind into the lowest submission and abasement, and to represent the monkish virtues of mortification, penance, humility and passive suffering, as the only qualities which are acceptable to him (1993, p.163).

Hume suggests that religious believers seek to please the deity by the performance of acts of religion or by the holding of particular religious beliefs rather than by the living of a good life, and, in this manner they do not act for the preservation of genuine moral principles, essential for the existence of society. Hume attacks the interest religions may have in 'frivolous observances' 'intemperate zeal' and 'rapturous exstasies' (1993, p.179). Hume regrets the fact that human beings seem never to be satisfied with exercise of virtue and the doing of duty to their fellow human beings and the finding in this the way of serving God. Instead human beings seek to find ways of serving God directly doing this to fend off the terrors they experience in life.



Hume compares the practice of religion with the life of true virtue. The practices of religion may be engaged in by those who commit even the very worst of crimes; they do not prevent the commission of evil deeds and they cannot even offer comfort to those who seek in them comfort when they commit evil deeds. Against this Hume places a life of ‘manly, stedly virtue, which either preserves us from disastrous, melancholy accidents, or teaches us to bear them’ (1993, p.182).

None of this leads Hume to suggest the reality of the existence of a deity is to be doubted; in true theism fine and admirable things are to be found, ‘the good, the great, the sublime, the ravishing’ (184). But so often in religion, in the false visions of religion, Hume finds ‘the base, the absurd, the mean, the terrifying’ (1993, p.184). Human reason can attain the knowledge of a supreme being, and the knowledge is a ‘noble privilege’ (1993, p.94). But so often religion produces only ‘sick men’s dreams’ (1993, p.184).

Using Hume’s *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* of 1779 (1993) to establish what Hume has to say about God, religion, prayer and worship is not easy. All readers of the *Dialogues* need to face the question of where in this text we can find the voice of Hume. (J.C.A. Gaskin offers us a comprehensive account of this question: J.C.A. Gaskin *Hume’s Philosophy of Religion*, 1988, p.210).

In the voice of Pamphilus at the opening of these dialogues, we are offered a general orientation to the Dialogues. Pamphilus proposes that although the Dialogues will open up the question of the nature of the deity they do not call into question the existence of that deity. 'What Truth so obvious, so certain, as the *Being* of a God, which the most ignorant Ages have acknowleg'd' (1993, p.30).

In the very last part of this work, in a dialogue between Cleanthes and Philo, Hume speaks to us through the dialogue between Cleanthes and Philo about the offering of prayer and worship to God.

Philo professes his veneration for what he calls 'true Religion' while at the same time his hostility towards 'vulgar Superstition'. He owns to his delight in pushing principles about vulgar superstition to 'absurdity' and 'impiety' (1993, p.121). Cleanthes professes his own reluctance to propose the abandonment or the neglect the religion however corrupt that religion might be because even corrupt religion is able to provide the necessary security for the moral life. Philo urges instead that corrupt religion, vulgar superstition, is the foundation for much that is evil. Even more, he urges, wherever religion appears in our history, we find there a whole host of miseries attached to it. Even more he urges: 'And no Period of time can be happier or more prosperous, than those in which it is never regarded, or heard of' (1993, p.122).

For Cleanthes the true purpose of religion is to act as a foundation for the moral life: 'The proper office of religion is to regulate the hearts of men, humanize their conduct, infuse a spirit of temperance, order, and obedience' (1993, p.122). On this count religion the true purpose of religion can be mistaken and lost: 'and as its operation is silent, and only inforces the motives of morality and justice, it is in danger of being overlooked, and confounded with these other motives'(1993, p.122). When religion tries to go beyond the sustaining of morality and justice it becomes only a 'cover to faction and ambition' (1993, p.122). All religion will fall into such a place as this, urges Philo, all religion 'except the philosophical and rational kind'. Those, who cultivate such a life of reason and reflection have no need of religious reasons to keep them faithful to the living out of a moral life. The 'vulgar', are unable to live a life of pure rational philosophy and they cannot be satisfied with the notion that the deity can be pleased only by the living out of a virtuous life. It is the vulgar who believe they need to please the deity by 'frivolous observances, or rapturous ecstasies, or bigoted credulity' (1993, p.124). Those who divert attention away from the truly pleasing life of virtue towards a 'frivolous Species of Merit' draw human beings away from true justice and true humanity. Such vulgar religion is ineffective in the maintenance of the moral life it proposes to secure. Those who seek to propagate and sustain religion need to be restrained in any society by civil society and its officers, for their projects, far from sustaining the moral life,

only bring evil and pernicious consequences to a society; very particularly, the number and the authority of any priesthood needs to be held within very particular limits by those who govern civil society itself.

Philo argues that in the practices of religion human beings are given to propose a deity who is tremendous and exalted and who is to be pleased. In such religion the deity is thought of as having human passions and needs; worst of all in such religion the deity is said to have, what Philo takes to be, one of the lowest of all human passions, the desire for 'applause' (1993, p.128). The true worship of God is simply to have knowledge of God. Vulgar and superstitious religion proposes a worship which degrades God to one of the lowest forms of passion in human life. Thus this religion degrades God 'to the low Condition of Mankind, which are delighted with Entreaty, Sollicitation, Presents, and Flattery' (1993, p.128).

## Immanuel Kant and the denial of the requirement laid on human beings to offer acts of prayer and worship to God

When we come to the work of Immanuel Kant my question receives what I read to be a profoundly negative answer. I shall offer my own reading of what the major writings of Kant can be shown to say in answer to my question. Before I offer my own reading of Kant I shall draw out what some of the most significant recent commentators on the work of Kant have to say about how Kant treats the whole world of prayer and worship.

### Readings of Kant's moral philosophy, prayer and worship

Keith Ward (1972), writing on the *Lectures on Ethics*, suggests that in these lectures Kant maintains that the only important and morally significant role of religion lies in obedience to the moral law and the holding in oneself the hope of grace. Thus devotion is said to be valuable, in Kant, only as a means for human beings to acquire the habit of doing good. Kant is said to 'have no time for worship' (1972, p.62) or, more particularly, 'not much time for public worship' (1972, p.64); Kant is said to have a particular abhorrence for the notion that human beings might seek a personal communion with God. In Ward's reading of Kant's *Religion within the boundaries of mere reason* we see a very negative account of what Kant has to say about prayer and worship.

Thus worship is nothing but 'favour currying' and 'Most of the devotional practices of Christianity are here condemned' (1972, p.150).

Ward has it that Kant himself claimed to have preserved the essence of Christianity within his own moral account of the religion. But Ward rejects Kant's reading of his own work on religion: 'Even if his ethics is fundamentally religious, it is not compatible with Christianity in most of its forms' (1972, p.157). Ward reads Kant's ethics as a 'deeply religious ethics expressed in a radically humanistic terminology', an ethics which is 'unmistakably Christian in origin' but one which 'significantly amends Christian doctrine in a number of ways' (1972, p.167). What many Christians might cherish especially in the practice of their faith, in prayer and worship, some sense of personal relationship with God, is said by Ward to be 'entirely lacking in the Kantian scheme' (1972, p.169).

Roger Sullivan (1989) insists that Kant has a fundamentally religious orientation, insisting again and again that the moral law itself requires human beings to believe in God. However, the nature of the faith which emerges in Kant is a purely moral faith, a faith which indeed fundamentally religious but a faith which avoids all speculative and dogmatic accounts of the Godhead and it avoids these for such matters as these are themselves beyond the power of human reason (1989, p.274). Inside this moral faith it is evident to Sullivan that for Kant human beings have no special or particular duties to God, the

duties laid on human beings are the duties which govern their moral relations with other human beings (1989, p.263). It is coherent for Kant, then, to speak of the service of a church, a service which is twofold: 'the observance of universal ethical duties based on reason alone and aimed at virtue' and 'the fulfilment of those duties necessary to maintain the church as a visible community' (1989, p.265). However, says Sullivan, when a church attempts to set out special material duties to God, Kant regards such a church as a place of 'theocratic tyranny' and the work of such a church as the work of a despot (1989, p.266). So Sullivan finds in Kant the rejection of those acts of human beings by which they set out to please God by anything other than the living of the moral life as nothing but a pseudo service of God. The Kant of Sullivan gives prayer no value apart from the promotion of an 'authentic moral disposition' and gives the rituals of religion no power at all to make human beings good in themselves (1989, p.272).

John Hare (1996) takes note of what he sees to be a significant if not the prevailing reading of Kant in which Kant is to be associated with the decline of Christian faith in the West. Hare's Kant stays close to the Christian tradition within which he grew up. For Hare, Kant is one who presents a threefold morality which is entirely familiar to Christians, a morality which proposes that morality is to be traced through a framework of creation, fall and redemption (1996, p.35). Hare proposes that even a pure rationalist can accept that it is coherent to speak of a special revelation. On this account it is

open to us to talk of commands which are given to us supernaturally so long as we do not claim that all rational agents are bound by these commands. On this way of reading Kant it becomes possible to talk of particular commands of God, given in the Bible, which would need to be consistent with practical reason, which an individual could take as commands of God, so long as nobody claims that these commands bind all rational agents. Hare draws on what he presents as Kant's distinction between the treatment of religion as being purely within the moral order and the treatment of religion from the point of view of its material aspects, which need not see religion as purely moral at all.

Hare considers two ways of reading Kant. In the first Kant is a religious sceptic, 'sceptical and silent, for prudential reasons, about his scepticism' (1996, p.48). In the second Kant does not reject belief in supernatural revelation and does not reject belief in the 'central stories revealed in the Christian Bible' (1996, p.48). It might seem that the second of these readings is far from consistent with the picture of a man who so carefully avoided attending religious ceremonies. But, perhaps, says Hare, Kant avoided these ceremonies not because of lack of belief but because of a hatred of compulsion, the sort of compulsion which might have been associated with the practice of attending religious ceremonies. Hare even considers the possibility that 'Kant may have refused to attend because he loved the doctrines, not because he rejected them' (1996, p.48). Sadly for us, Hare does



not offer us a reading of what Kant has to say about the offering to God of acts of prayer and worship.

Allen Wood's exposition of Kant's 'moral religion' (1970) gives only very slight attention to the matter of the offering to God of prayer and worship. Wood searches in Kant for an account of what Kant sees to be the true moral community, the true Church. He points to Kant's account of this true moral community, a place where human beings can live under one common father in a 'free universal and enduring union of hearts' (1970, p.193). Kant finds already in existence a multiplicity of faiths and religions; what he is looking for is the one pure religious faith; this one pure faith is the true essence of all other ecclesiastical faiths. In these ecclesiastical faiths the true nature of duty, the recognizing of all moral duties as divine commands, is very often replaced by the imposition of special duties to God. Such a replacement is a restriction imposed on the freedom which is a part of true faith. These ecclesiastical faiths set out to placate God and to win favours from God by means other than other than morally good conduct. In this place such an ecclesiastical faith becomes subject to illusion as it attempts to offer pseudo service to God; the offering of worship, if it is thought to be the offering of a true duty to God, is to be the engagement in pseudo service and it is an illusion. The construction of a true moral faith depends in part on letting go of the illusion of pseudo

service. Thus will come about an enlightenment which will release human beings from a self imposed tutelage of an ecclesiastical faith (1970, p.196)

Wood (1999) offers us an account of what Kant means by the notion that religion is the recognition of all duties as divine commands. First, it means that only God is a suitable legislator for the moral community. This arises from the fact the ideal moral community must be thought of as universal and its laws must thought of as holy; the moral community itself is always limited and fallible. For this reason, since we require legislation from a moral community which is universal and holy, then God becomes the one who legislates for the whole community. Second, the duties we see as divine commands are not special duties towards God (and there is no need for such duties but they are the duties we all have towards each other. Third, it means that religion becomes simply the moral disposition to observe all duties as God's commands.

Wood gives us a Kant who was an opponent of the Protestant faith of his own time, an opponent of clericalism, an opponent of any form of mysticism and a man who refused to have anything to do with the ceremonies of religion. He presents us with a Kant who saw the future role of the Church to be a place of freedom, a place of the entirely voluntary where human beings would 'would no longer (be) subjected to the humiliating tutelage of a priestly hierarchy' (1999, p.318). What would such a Church become? 'In such a church, true

divine service would be recognized as coinciding entirely with rational morality, and religion would be gradually purged of superstition and slavish attitudes of mind' (1999, p.318). It would have been good to see the particular place of the offering to God of acts of prayer and worship within such a presentation of what Kant has to say about religion, but Allen, given what he has to say about Kant and religion, does not do so.

Wood (2005) emphasizes the sense in which Kant is not antagonistic to true religion but only to forms of popular religion and to the use made of popular religion by the power of the clergy. True religion which brings together human beings for a collective moral improvement of the whole human race is indeed entirely necessary if human beings are to fulfil their vocation as moral beings (2005, p.180). In human society there is a natural tendency to competition between human beings and there is thus a tendency for human beings to place their own selfish ends above the ends of others; herein lies a part of that radical evil which lies in all of us. In order to counteract this tendency human beings must learn to live within societies where the ends of all are sought by all and thus in which radical evil can be overcome. Religion has a role to play in this process. Religion, however, has not established and lived out its real role for it has, instead, been used for quite other purposes.

Religions as we know them have been founded on what they take to be divine revelation. Such religions have commonly been ruled by priestly tyrants who

have done more to enslave than to liberate the minds and spirits of human beings (2005, p.183). Within these religions human beings have been led to attempt to serve God by acts of religion, by worship and prayer and by religious forms of personal and community discipline. In this way religious faiths have led their members into acts which are at best morally indifferent and at worst degrading. So the members of religions such as these have been led into

‘regular performances of fetishistic conjuration of divine presence or formalized practices of slavish praise and contemptible begging directed at the divine being – conceived, accordingly, as a vain tyrant who is disposed to favour unjustly those cringing subjects who most flatter him and abase themselves before him’ (2005, p.184).

For Kant, true religion will be quite other than this. True religion will liberate human beings to live freely and will deliver them from the enslavements of tyrannical religion. Instead of attempting to serve God by all manner of degrading conduct and ritual true religion will lead human beings to discover that all they need to do is to recognize all duties, which are to be freely decided on, to recognize them as commands of the divine rational will. In this way human beings will be led to serve God not by worship or prayer but by the correct performance of all of their deeds.

Bernard Reardon (1988) considers the final part of the *Religion within the boundaries of mere reason*. The true service of God, he says, is nothing but ‘the recognition of all moral duties as divine commands’ (1988, p.146). There is thus, in true religion, no notion that religion consists in the offering of

‘courtly obligations’ special duties to God. The pseudo service of God for Kant, the false worship of God, is says Reardon, to be found in all the historical forms of religion. Reardon offers a sharp brief summary of what Kant has to say about worship and prayer: ‘Public worship of any kind – for to private prayer Kant can attach no significance whatever – is no more than a means of acquiring a right disposition in the sight of God’. Thus for human beings to imagine that worship is anything other than this is for them to be trapped by an illusion. ‘This inveterate tendency to replace true worship of God by the false, is one might say, the church’s original sin, its radical evil’ (1988, p.149).

Reardon offers us an account of the forms of alleged, pseudo service of God in his reading of Kant. First among these observances which are alleged falsely to be the service of God is private prayer which is only a ‘means of stimulating personal moral feeling – the only use Kant can think of it as fulfilling’ (1988, p.153). Reardon comments further:

‘Prayer (Kant) sees as no more than a stated wish addressed to a Being who has no need to be informed of the inner disposition of him who offers it. Nothing therefore is achieved by it, and it discharges none of the duties which, although understood as divine commands, already impose themselves upon us as morally obligatory’ (1988, p.154).

Does prayer have no value then? ‘The ‘Spirit of prayer’, as a hearty desire to be well-pleasing to God, we ought always indeed to have; in possessing it,

however, a man should expect only to affect himself, creating within himself a right disposition of mind by means of the idea of God’.

Second among these four outward observances is church-going. God is not directly served by church going and neither does God reward church goers for the alleged service of God offered there. Public worship does not bring grace to the worshipper for God is not directly served by such worship; the notion that grace can be bestowed on the worshipper because of worship is wholly an illusion. ‘It in no way enhances citizenship of the kingdom of God, but rather debases it, leading as always to self-deception and hypocrisy’ (1988, p.155).

Third among these four outward observances is the practice of initiation which is not holy nor is it productive of holiness, it is not a means of grace even though it is held in high regard in the church.

Fourth among these outward observances is the celebration of communion which does not at all guarantee special divine favour, is not an act of the true service of God and it is not a means of grace.

Where does Kant’s whole treatment of religion leave us? Reardon summarizes it neatly: ‘In fine, religion is good moral conduct, and nothing more – supernatural faith, devotion, prayer, worship or sacrament – besides’ (1988, p.156).

Gordon Michalson, (1999), offers us no word at all about what Kant has to say about prayer and worship; he is, then, of little direct use for our study. It is good, however, to take notice of the Kant who is offered to us by Michalson, a Kant whose philosophy serves as a pathway not towards Christian belief and practice but towards post – Hegelian atheism. It is at the core of Michalson's reading of Kant that the use by theologians of Kant's philosophy in the proposition of some mediating position which can hold together Christian theism and modernity is entirely without foundation in Kant's own work. In particular, Michalson maintains that Kant's account of the nature of human autonomy makes it impossible to maintain any form of Christian faith. It is good to put such a reading of Kant against the very different reading of Kant which we find in the reading of Kant offered to us by Stephen Palmquist.

Stephen Palmquist offers us, in his two volume study *Kant's System of Perspectives*, and most particularly for us in the second volume of this work, *Kant's Critical Religion* (2000) a very extensive re-reading of Kant's whole approach to religion in general and to worship and prayer in particular. To take on Palmquist's whole project as offering a reading of the whole of Kant's philosophy of religion goes beyond our present needs. However, we shall look, and this very briefly, at Palmquist's account of Kant's philosophy of religion in general, before advancing to explore what Palmquist has to say about Kant's approach, more specifically, to prayer and worship

Palmquist looks to the question of whether or not Kant's critical philosophy serves to destroy any possibility of theology. Palmquist offers his answer to this question, an answer he declares he will seek to demonstrate throughout and to maintain for the whole of this second part of his study of Kant's philosophy of religion. Palmquist sets out his answer in these terms: 'Kant destroys not so much the possibility of theology as that of the one-sided rationalist spirit of the Enlightenment, in the midst of which he himself was nurtured. His genius is to have done this *without* going to the opposite extreme of embracing positivism.' (2000, p.13). He proposes a reading of Kant in which Kant is to be seen a constructive friend of theology and religion. He seeks to replace the often proposed reading of Kant in which Kant advances 'an austere, deistic agnosticism and moral reductionism' with a reading of Kant in which Kant offers a richly theocentric philosophical system (2000, p.16). According to Palmquist, Kant's true purpose was to defend the faith in which grew up by separating off and valuing the pietistic elements of his family faith from the entirely unnecessary elements, the trappings of faith which he was intent on removing altogether from the religion he sets out to defend (2000, p.140). This Kant is intent on offering 'an Enlightenment apologetic for the Christian religion' (2000, p.243). It is often said that Kant attacked the notion that there could be any ways of honouring God except through one's moral life. Not so says Palmquist. Kant, he says, is only seeking to attack the notion that nonmoral acts (such as for us, here, acts of prayer and worship) can replace, can take the place of purely



moral acts; so long as a proper attention is given to moral acts there is no need to remove from the life of the religious believer acts which are nonmoral acts. What Kant is intent on removing, however, is the notion that any such non moral acts (so form us acts of prayer and worship) can be proposed as duties which bind human beings (2000, p.181).

How does Palmquist read what Kant has to say about worship? It is often remarked on that Kant himself avoided attending acts of public worship. Does this show that Kant was entirely opposed to public worship? Not at all, says Palmquist; all that this shows is that Kant probably suffered from an overly individualistic personality who was unable to see the need for himself to be a part of the offering of any public acts of worship (2000, p.141).

Palmquist approaches what Kant has to say about worship by placing it alongside his own convictions about what it is to love God and to worship God (2000, p.251). His treatment of what Kant has to say about worshipping God depends on making a distinction between Kant's philosophical theology and its purposes and Palmquist's own Christian, biblical theology. What Palmquist has to say here about Kant depends on accepting Palmquist's sharp division of philosophical theology from biblical, Christian theology. Philosophical theology, and Kant's philosophical theology, takes as its starting point the question of the theoretical value of philosophical, theoretical arguments for, and against, the existence of God; this point of departure then

colours the whole of the rest of the philosophical theology. Christian, biblical theology, the sort of biblical, Christian theology Palmquist espouses, takes its starting point from an entirely different place, from a belief in our need to love God. Palmquist proposes the notion that Kant and Palmquist are not trying to do the same thing at all, but equally well nor are they trying to do contradictory things.

What does a Palmquistian Christian biblical theology, wish to say about worship? Worship in this system is the practice of proclaiming the love we might have and show for God in response to the love that this God has shown to us. What does Kant wish to say about worship? Kant treats worship ‘as a mere by-product of genuine rational religion’ (2000, p.254). He removes worship from the centre stage of his rational religion; he warns against the danger of allowing religion to occupy a place where it can in any way eclipse the place of the moral. But Kant's warnings, maintains Palmquist, only have to do with the misuse of worship in religion, with the notion that the offering of religion itself is in some manner pleasing to God; Kant maintains that such a view of worship subverts true morality and true religion. Palmquist’s professedly biblical Christian system also maintains that worship can be misused, it can become false worship and this when there arises in religion a pure concentration on trying to please God simply by uttering the right words and the right phrases; such false worship would also subvert true religion. So

now Palmquist finds an identity of concern in both Kant's system and in his own; both of them are concerned to avoid the misuse of worship.

Palmquist takes note of Kant's notion that there are no special duties to God; such a claim seems, at first sight, to run counter to the emphases of the sort of Christianity Palmquist espouses. Not so once again says Palmquist. Christian faith proclaims the call offered to human beings to love God. It is not the case that Christian faith lays on human beings a special duty to love God; such a call is not command that must be obeyed but rather an invitation which can be accepted. So, for Palmquist, worshipping God as a means of expressing our love of God cannot be commanded: 'the 'greatest commandment' is the genuinely *ultimate* 'command' that cannot actually be commanded' (2000, p.255).

Palmquist places worship at the centre of his form of Christian faith but places worship at the periphery in Kant's system. Placing worship in such different places does not, urges Palmquist, mean that we are caught in a contradiction. For Palmquist, Kant is approaching religion, and worship within it, from the point of view of a philosophical, reflective perspective; in these terms what Kant has to say is entirely appropriate. But for Palmquist, what he himself wishes to say about worship he does so from a 'believer's existential Perspective' (2000, p.257). So both Kant and Palmquist's Christian are, it might be urged (and Palmquist does urge it) correct, they do not touch each

other, they are not approaching one practice from one perspective, they are not contradicting each other, they may both be held simultaneously by one person seeing the world from two perspectives.

What Palmquist has to say about Kant's approach to prayer is very like what he has to say about Kant's approach to worship. Kant's proposal of a pure rational religion, which makes it possible to sustain a true empirical religion, might also seem, at the same time, to offer an entire contradiction to the validity of any and every empirical religion. What Kant is doing, however, urges Palmquist, is not to remove the validity of there being a valid empirical religion but only to ward off any pseudo religion, any religion which seeks to please God by anything other than the living out of the purely moral life (2000, p.484). Thus Kant is not seeking to remove the practice and the value of prayer but is only seeking to clarify and to purify the practice of prayer by purifying the intentions of the one who offers prayer to God. Essentially, for Kant, it is said, prayer loses its proper value when those offering prayer are offering it with the intention of going beyond prayer, which is at heart a moral act serving to stimulate the one who prays to lead a better life, and seeking to avoid genuine moral responsibilities in a futile attempt to offer non moral acts which can please God directly. The true value of prayer can be said to lie in its inner spirit, in its moral disposition to do what is truly a part of the good life, and not in its external and verbal acts. Human beings may need to offer external verbal acts when they pray, but the value of prayer does

not derive from these external verbal acts but only from in its proper inner spirit. The offering of external verbal acts is only necessary for human beings as a means by which the true inner spirit, the appropriate moral disposition can be awakened; the external acts are not needed by the God who is being prayed to and they cannot be said to serve and to please this God in any manner at all. So it is that as religious believers mature in their faith, it becomes less and less necessary for them to offer external, verbal acts at all. The offering of such external acts is not and cannot be a matter of duty (2000, p.491). The use at all of external verbal prayer can only be to stimulate in the human being the correct and appropriate intention. Thus Kant encourages the use of inner, contemplative prayer. What Kant is not doing is to stop human beings from praying; all that Kant is trying to do is to awaken the true spirit of prayer (2000, p.488).

When Kant approaches verbal prayer made by human beings praying together in public, he does indeed place a high value on such public prayer, but the high value derives not from any value of a human prayer being offered to God to please God, but only from its considerable power of raising immensely the moral intentions of those who act together in such public prayer (2000, p.494) Kant might even himself be seen as a man of prayer, but a man of prayer who avoided verbal prayer and who engaged in inner contemplative prayer, the true prayer of the philosopher (2000, p.493).

### *The Lectures on Ethics*

At Konigsberg Kant lectured on ethics over thirty times. We do not have Kant's lecture notes for this series of lectures on ethics. What we have are several sets of lecture notes taken by Kant's students. One of the most extensive sets of notes that we have were made by Georg Ludwig Collins, notes made on lectures of the winter semester of 1784-1785.

The first part of these notes 'On Universal Practical Philosophy', sets out Kant's exploration of the elements of the foundations of a system of ethics.

Kant explores the nature of the ideal of moral perfection and the character of what might be said to be the supreme principle of morality. For Kant, morality and its judgements find their foundation either on empirical or on intellectual grounds. Whether the grounds are empirical or intellectual they may be presented to us either from within ourselves as internal principles or from outside ourselves as external principles. He dismisses moral systems and all moral judgements within them which are founded on empirical grounds; the moral system and its moral judgements find their true foundation wholly on intellectual grounds. 'The judgement of morality does not take place at all through sensuous and empirical principles, for morality is no object of the senses, but rather an object merely of the understanding' (2001a,

p.49). The general and basic moral principles which propose the foundations of morality and of its moral judgements on purely intellectual grounds, may either be internal principles, principles which depend only on the 'inner nature of the action, so far as we apprehend it through the understanding' or external principles, 'insofar as our actions have a relation to a being other than ourselves' (2001a, p.50). For Kant, morality may only be founded on principles which are both intellectual and internal.

What, is the place of God in the moral life? Since the foundation of morality and of our moral judgements lies within us, we cannot rightly give it any external foundation. So morality cannot find its foundation in any concept of the 'will of God' nor can we derive any possible system of moral duties from or find their origin in this divine will (2001a, p.67). We might need to make use of some knowledge of God in order to make our moral laws effective, but we do not need this knowledge of God in order for us to have such a knowledge of the moral law nor of our moral duties within it. We do not have knowledge of the divine will and, from this the foundation, moral knowledge, but rather we first have knowledge of the moral law and only from this we are able to know the nature of this divine will itself. We are able to conceive of God 'as possessing the holiest and most perfect will' (2001a, p.68) How are we to know what the perfect will is? 'We are shown this by the moral law, and thus we have the whole of ethics'. Thus we are able to have a knowledge of the perfect will because we can know the moral

law. 'We therefore recognize the perfection of the divine will from the moral law' (2001a, p.68).

It is possible for us to establish a concept of God and then a concept of morality that corresponds to this concept of God. When we proceed in this way the concept of God we establish is founded on our human estimation of the things we know and admire and not on any pure or holy ethical concept. One way our imagination suggests to us is to see God as a great and mighty lord who needs to be praised and glorified by us. We imagine that by praising such a God we will win his favour. Conceiving of God in this manner and having particular regard to our own failings, believing that all human beings have such failings, we imagine that all human beings are incapable of doing anything about these failings and thus we bring these failings to God.

'Hence they gather all their sins into a heap and lay them at God's feet, and sigh, and think thereby to honour Him, and so not see that a praise so trifling, from such worms as we are, is a slur upon God, and that they simply cannot praise Him' (2001a, p.69).

We are able to honour God, not by prayer, but by obeying the will of God; and not only by obeying this will but by obeying it gladly: 'To honour God is to do His bidding gladly, not to exalt Him with laudatory phrases' (2001a, p.69) Kant makes a distinction between two ways of doing the will of God. There is the doing the will of God simply because of the inner goodness of the actions themselves, and indeed the doing of this will with gladness. There is the doing of God's will because God wills it, and indeed the doing of this will because we believe God forces upon us that will and that he does so be



inducing fear and terror within us. What is truly pleasing to God is for us to do what is absolutely good in itself and to do so gladly. What then, we might ask, might be the value of the works of piety?

‘To act morally is not piety, therefore, as it would be on the theological principle; to act morally is virtue, though if it occurs according to God’s beneficent will, then it becomes piety’ (2001a, p.69).

Kant sets out an account of what he considers to be the nature of ethics. Ethics concerns itself with the good acts we perform and the good dispositions which guide those acts. The actions we perform have both outer and inner aspects. Ethics is concerned with the inner aspect of our actions, the very intrinsic quality of our actions, that is the dispositions by which we act. When we act from on or because of the inner goodness of the action itself alone then our disposition is a moral disposition. Jurisprudence, by contrast, is concerned only with the outer aspect of our actions, not with the inner goodness but only with the outer lawfulness of our actions. We can do the things we do because we believe that God, the supreme lawgiver and judge, has demanded we do them; when we act in this way, we can achieve some external and purely juridical goodness. If, when we act, we act according to the belief that the God demands of us such good dispositions that we act not from fear but only because of the inherent goodness of the actions themselves then our actions are ethical actions. If we act with such a good disposition and even do so willingly, then we act according to the love of God. The moral law governs our inner dispositions. In ethics we are concerned only with the measure in which the spirit of the moral law is fulfilled in the inner

dispositions which govern our actions. The moral law is a law whose principles are pure, whose principles contain the absolute and unchanging standard of moral perfection. The Gospels present such a law, a law which demands moral purity; in offering such a law the Gospels reject in the name of such moral purity any law which concerns itself with external actions, with external observance.

Kant next considers the character of natural religion. Religion is the combination of ethics and theology, it is the application of morality to God. There are so-called religions which have no concern for morality at all but which are concerned only with external worship, 'external cultus', and with religious observances; such religions are no true religions. (2001a, p.95). Religion assumes morality, morality cannot be derived from religion. Any religion which does not assume morality is merely a religion of external worship, of the service of God by service and praise. Pagan religion, all pagan religion, is precisely religion without morality, religion concerned to offer merely service, the mere worship of God.

Natural religion includes the natural knowledge we have of our duties to God. For us to have a knowledge of our duties to God we do not need to have any extensive theological notions of God; all that we need to know of God is what is necessary for us to have a sufficient ground for our pure morality. The only element of theology that we need for natural religion and for the knowledge of

our duties to God is the simple knowledge we may have of the condition of moral perfection. We need only be able to postulate one who is a holy lawgiver, a benevolent ruler and a just judge and be able to assume that all of these functions may be fulfilled by one being for us to have a sufficient theological basis for natural religion. This is all the knowledge we need to be able to do what is our duty to God; all of us are capable of attaining this knowledge.

We might wish to make a distinction between two forms of religion, inner and outer religion, the religion of inner religious disposition and the religion of outer religious observance. Kant believes that true religion can only be a matter of inner religious disposition. Whatever outward acts we may perform in religion they are only a means or an expression of the inner religious disposition, the outward acts are not and cannot be religious acts in themselves. The true acts of religion are purely internal acts, are purely a matter of inner religious disposition (2001a, p.97).

We may fall into error in theology; such errors affect our knowledge of God. We may also fall into error in religion; errors in religion affect and corrupt morality itself. We may fall into the error of 'sophistication' by demanding to be able to know and to prove more about God than we need in order to be able to make use of God as the principle of morality. All that we do need is to be able to make use of an hypothesis, and only a hypothesis, by which we assume the existence of a God who can be the principle of morality by being the holy

lawgiver, benevolent ruler and just judge. We may fall into the error of 'superstition' by allowing ourselves, irrationally, to make our religious judgements depend on fear. It is in this way that we fall into the tendency and the error of making religious observance a principle of religion instead of regarding it as only as a means to religion.

It is possible for us to misuse religious expressions of devotion to God by using them as a means of obtaining favour from God by offering 'external tokens of respect and laudatory ejaculations'. The making of such offerings is entirely 'repulsive'.

'It is a hateful and repulsive thing to adopt this mode of honouring God, for in that case we think we win Him over without being moral, merely by flattery, and picture Him to ourselves as a mundane ruler whom we try to please by submissive acts of service, hymns of praise and sycophancy' (2001a, p.102).

Kant does accept that we might have a need to cultivate a spirit of devoutness before God and even to perform devotional exercises. But the purpose of such devoutness and of such devotional exercises can only properly be so that through them we might become more well-disposed to practice the moral law and to develop the habit of doing good. Acts of devotion, considered as an activity on their own, have no point at all. True religion demands that we try with all our power to live in accordance with the moral law; we can then hope that in doing this we are becoming worthy of divine help, help which make up for the deficiencies we still have in our moral life. It is unbelief to live without such a striving to live in accordance with the moral law and to

replace this striving with the performance of religious ceremonies. (2001a, p.102)

For Kant for us to live in faith is for us to trust that if we have done all in our power to live according to the moral law then God will make up whatever is lacking in our achievement. We are then to approach God in reverence, in love and in fear. We are to think of the moral law as the law of God; we show reverence to God by treating this law as holy, showing respect for it and by seeking to live according to this law. We show love for God by loving the rule, the law of God. We show fear of God by living in such a way, striving to live in accordance with his law, that we need have no cause to be afraid of God.

Kant explores the necessity of our offering prayer to God. The purpose of prayer might be considered in two ways. We might offer prayer so that we obtain what we need, so that we may satisfy our wants. We might offer prayer so that in doing so we induce in ourselves some moral disposition. It is never a necessity, either objectively or subjectively, to offer prayer to obtain what we need from God. The only necessity we do have to offer prayer is the subjective necessity we may have to induce in us some moral disposition. By prayer we may indeed stir up devotion in ourselves; and by devotion we may stir up such knowledge of God that we might be inspired to some moral action. Only in this way might prayer be said to be a necessity.

Prayer is a means by which we may be moved to some moral action. Prayer is not in any way a 'conversation with God'; to imagine that prayer is a conversation with God is absurd. Kant writes: It is in general an absurdity to wish to talk with God. We can only talk to somebody we can see; But we cannot intuit God, but can only believe that he exists, it is utterly absurd to talk with someone who is not intuitited'. And Kant adds this: 'Prayer therefore has only a subjective use' (2001a, p.109)

What sort of prayer might we need to offer? When we pray some feel the need to use words, silently in ourselves or aloud; others are able to pray without words. Praying using words is a sign of our human weakness; we use words when we are unable to think without the aid of words. When we use words in prayer we are indeed talking to ourselves ; but we need to use these words both so that we may not fall into error in our prayer and so that our souls may have the necessary strength to pray. Some of us even need to pray aloud. But some of us have no need of words at all; if we are used to thinking in silence, if our minds are used to 'harbouring Ideas and dispositions' and if our moral and devotional dispositions are sufficiently intense, then we can pray entirely without words. What is essential to the offering of prayer? No words of prayer are needed; all that is needed is the spirit of prayer, 'the God-fearing disposition, the direction of the heart to God, so far as we put trust in Him, by faith, to take away our moral frailty and grant us blessedness' (2001a, p.109). Words spoken in prayer have no purpose as far as God is concerned

but they may still have value for ourselves. The words themselves have no value or necessity but they aid the proclamation of words, especially when they are spoken in some impressive ceremony and here they may serve in some manner to transform us. God cannot be served by our prayers; prayers are not some special way of serving God they are a means for training ourselves for good action.

‘Prayers, therefore, must not be regarded as a special way of serving God, but merely as a means of awakening dispositions devoted to Him. We serve God, not by words, ceremonies and grimaces, but when we express in our actions the dispositions that are devoted to God’ (2001a, p.110)

What sort of prayer are we to offer? It is understandable that we might be driven to offer particular prayers, asking that God might answer some particular need, especially when we ourselves are in some most urgent need or danger. Such prayers are of no use and they do not help us. The only prayers which we ought to make if we pray in faith are prayers that are not tied to some particular need but only those prayers which are general and not at all particular. An appropriate generality in prayer is only achieved when we ask that we might be made worthy of all the good things God gives to us and only such prayer is granted to us ‘for it is moral, and hence conformable to God’s wisdom’(2001a, p.110). When we pray in faith we can only pray for those things which can reasonably be hoped for from God. The only things which can reasonably be hoped for in prayer are spiritual objects and they are never temporal favours.

Kant explores the necessity for offering external acts of worship to God. For Kant religion may not be divided into external and internal religion; all religion is inward. We might perform external actions but these actions are not part of religion. Any outward actions we perform have the purpose of stirring up our inward dispositions in relationship to God; by such actions we may be disposed more nearly to follow the holy law of God so that all our actions and the whole of our life may find favour with God (2001a, p.113).

‘The religious acts we perform may be of two kinds, acts which are Godfearing acts and acts which are acts of service to God. How may we truly fear God and perform God-fearing acts? We may fear God only by holding the law of God, God's holy law, in veneration and by reflecting this law in the whole of our lives; actions which show this veneration are the only God-fearing actions. (2001a, p.112).

It is possible for us to imagine that we are capable of offering acts of particular service to God. We do this because we have falsely applied to God what we have learned from our relationship to other human beings. We offer particular acts of service to other human beings, acts of service to those who stand in authority over us so that they might favour us; those who occupy positions of power and authority over us do or seem to desire that we offer such acts of service. We imagine that we can likewise offer acts of particular service to God. We have also come to believe that just as those who stand in authority over us demand such service that God demands such service; indeed we have come to believe that God has even promulgated his commands that we should so serve him. In all religions we find human beings performing external observances believing that in them we may serve



God, external observances in themselves have no moral value, they neither help us nor in them do we serve God. We may serve God only by being God-fearing and by doing those acts which are God-fearing; in this way God is served (2001a, p.112) We cannot serve God by offering any particular acts of external religious observance but only by offering a service through the whole of our lives. When we imagine that we can serve God by offering acts of service we are in error. Any particular acts that we can perform can only be acts within the world, they cannot reach beyond this world so that they might affect God. Any religious acts that we perform do not and cannot affect God, do not serve God, but only affect ourselves.

Devotional exercises and prayer help to dispose us to please God by the way in which we live the whole of our lives. 'So we are not going to serve God when we go to church; we are only going there to school ourselves, so that we may hereafter serve Him in our lives' (2001a, p.113) The purpose of religious worship is to help to dispose our minds to the true service of God by the whole of our lives.

All worship is made up of moral exercises, prayers sermons and certain physical acts, and of mere external observances; the more worship is made up of external religious observances the less it offers moral exercise which may be able to dispose us to the service of God. Human beings seek to serve God by maintaining external religious practices and offering external religious worship, in so doing we act in error; we are trying to serve God by ways which do not demand a great deal of us. We falsely imagine that by performing certain external religious acts we can avoid the truly demanding task of finding true service of God in the whole of our lives. We have invented this false way of attempting to serve God: 'The *cultus* is thus an invention of men' (2001a, p.113).

We cannot serve God by outward religious acts; we serve God by acts which are directed to God himself. We can serve God by the whole of our life. Any external religious acts, any acts offered as direct service of God do not serve God but have the effect of strengthening our disposition to serve God by our surrender to God and to follow his holy law. There is indeed a value in the outward religious worship offered by community, but it is not the value of serving God but it is the value of inspiring the members of that community to serve God by the whole of their lives. We cannot face God's justice simply by offering prayer or worship to God and then hoping to find God's mercy and forgiveness. We can only face God's justice by doing all that is in our power

to do in the whole of our lives; only then can we hope that God will make up for whatever is imperfect in us. (2001a, p.114).

In religion we may try, in error, to serve God by trying to court favour with God or we may try, correctly, to serve God by the goodness of the whole of life (2001a, p.115). All religions may take these two forms. All religions may do harm if they lead us to try to serve God by the cultus. What is universal and good in all religions, however, is the desire to please God by the disposition of our hearts, by our carrying out of the law of God and, only then, by our proper hope that God will make up in us what is lacking. All religions may enable us, thereby, to serve God truly by the whole conduct of our lives. (2001a, p.117).

Religion has two elements, the honour of God and the love of God. We can honour human beings by external signs and ceremonies in which we honour and praise them and by doing their will. We can only honour God by doing God's will.

‘So if I practise the holy law from a sense of duty and reverence towards God, as the law-giver, and readily obey His commandments, which are worthy of respect, I do honour God’ (2001a, p.118).

We cannot love God by offering particular acts of love to God but we love God by obeying God's commandments and by doing so gladly. We can love God but only in an indirect manner. We might seek to honour other human beings by praising them, we cannot honour God in this manner. What does it

mean for us to praise God? To praise God is to find in God such perfection that will awaken in us dispositions to do the good. We cannot say, says Kant, that God has any desire to be praised by human beings. The offering of praise to God serves only our subjective purposes and not any objective reality. Kant urges that it would be better if human beings were taught how to feel true reverence for God rather than being taught all manner of words of praise which they do not feel. Teaching true reverence for God can be achieved if human beings are taught to realize the might of God which is shown to us in the immensity of the universe instead of being drawn into 'any amount of psalm-singing' (2001a, p.119). Human beings believe falsely that the offering of all manner of religious observances actually and directly please God and that such offerings are true religion. To live the good life, to live according to true religion, is to live conscientiously. Worship, external religious observance, is not the way of true religion and if we try to serve God in this manner it may well lead us into error. If, however, we treat all such external religious observance only and purely as means by which we may come to the true service of God, then this may perhaps, but not certainly so, be of value and a means of true religion.

We have no need when we are in the presence of others to feel in any way ashamed of our piety or of our fear of God; unless we are in the company of truly wicked people we are, indeed, unlikely to feel ashamed of such piety or of our fear of God. Other people may quite properly doubt that any

devoutness we show is really understood by us solely as a means by which we may be directed to the service of God; they might properly imagine that all of our devoutness is truly a matter of hypocrisy. We ourselves may know that our devoutness is not hypocritical, we may know that we do indeed understand the place of such devoutness only as a means to direct us to the true service of God. However, because our devoutness is open to such misunderstanding by others it is wise that we practice it in private. The hypocrite is glad when others find them in acts of devotion; the truly devout person is ashamed to be found in the exercise of devotion. (2001a, p.119).

There is a further reason why we might perhaps feel some shame if others know of our devotional practice. We only know God by faith, we cannot know God by any direct intuition. We can quite properly and without shame speak about God as the object of our faith and, speaking about God in such manner we can express our own wishes as if, and only as if, they were addressed to God. When we pray alone we can bring peace to our soul in this way. When such wishes are taken into public prayer and God is addressed directly then we seem to be attempting really to address God directly. We know that we cannot address God directly for we cannot encounter God in any direct intuition; God can only be approached in faith and not by any direct intuition.

‘But in church, prayer has something pathetic about it, in that the object of faith is turned into an object of intuition’ (2001a, p.120).

For both of these reasons it is better for us to avoid the public practice of devotion and to make all our devotions in private.

### *The Critique of Pure Reason*

What Kant says in the *Lectures on Ethics* about duty and intuition he also says in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

It is good to notice first, however, what Kant has to say about his fundamental purpose with regard to God and to faith. He denies that human beings have a knowledge of God as God is in God's self but he only does this, he says, not to destroy faith but rather to make room for faith (1998, p.Bxxx). He denies that human beings have a theoretical knowledge of God (and thus that there can be no theoretical proofs of God's existence). Instead he claims that our practical knowledge can establish in us a knowledge of God which is necessary for our actions in the world, a knowledge of God as a wise and benevolent God (thus Wood 2005; 180).

Our inability to have or to develop theoretical knowledge of God stems from the nature of human intuition. In human beings lies the capacity to intuit objects which are presented to our sensibility. All of our sensible intuitions arise in us through our senses and our senses engage us in direct and immediate contact with objects presented to our sensibility. No such engagement exists for human beings with regard to the Godhead. God is not

presented to us through our senses, is not open to direct and immediate contact with our sensible intuition; thus God is not available for us in and through our theoretical knowledge. Herein lies the origins of Kant's critique of the possible place of prayer and worship in any relationship we might have with God. Because we cannot achieve sensible intuition of God, we cannot point our actions directly to the Godhead in any such manner that prayer or worship might be able to be said to bring us into direct contact with God.

### *The Critique of Judgement*

In the *Critique of Judgement* Kant touches very briefly on the life of prayer and worship. As he explores the notion of the sublime he considers ways in which the notion of the sublime could be advanced. In religions human beings commonly offer acts of submission before the Godhead as they imagine they need to do.

‘In religion in general submission, adoration with bowed head, and remorseful and anxious gestures and voice, seem to be the only appropriate conduct in the presence of the Deity, and so to have been adopted and still observed by most people’ (2000, p.146).

But such offerings show that human beings who offer these acts do not truly understand the place of the notion of the sublime within their religious life nor in their approach to God. These forms of action show that human beings who offer these acts are really acting out of fear before the God head. It is only when human beings act from a sense of their own uprightness that they begin to relate properly to the sublimity of the being of the sublime God. Only then

are they acting out of true religion instead of out of superstition. When human beings engage with the Godhead as the sublime then instead of ‘currying favour’ and attempting to ‘ingratiate oneself’ they have a religion whose very nature is the living out of the good life (2000, p.147). What is most efficacious, then, in religion is simply one’s good conduct in life.

*Religion within the boundaries of mere reason*

Immanuel Kant’s *Religion within the boundaries of mere reason* (2001b) published in 1793, and given a second edition in 1794, has a great deal to tell us about what Kant believed about prayer and worship.

In the preface to the first edition Kant defends his right to present this new work on religion. The theologian might be asked to operate in two quite different manners. In the first the theologian operates purely and simply as a pastor, acting for the care of souls. In the second the theologian operates both as a pastor and as an academic scholar. It is the theologian who operates in the second of these two ways who has the responsibility for judging the first, restricting the work of the first so that the second is not disrupted. Even if they both operate as what Kant calls ‘biblical theologians’ it is the one who has both an academic care for theology as well as a care for souls with whom a primacy of censorship is lodged. Alongside the biblical theologian needs also to be placed the philosophical theologian. The philosophical theologian



needs to be given complete freedom to act as a theologian but only so long as this theologian stays within the confines of 'mere reason'. The theologian acting in this way may, however, make use of data drawn from religion, even from data drawn from the Bible. If the philosophical theologian does this then this theologian must not attempt to draw their conclusions over into biblical theology or public doctrine. If the philosophical theologian does this then the biblical theologian can claim that their rights have been impinged upon. No such violation of rights occurs, however, if the philosophical theologian merely uses data drawn from the domain occupied by religion and by the biblical theologian and uses it in a manner fitting for mere reason. In this fashion the domain of the biblical theologian is protected. However, the biblical theologian can draw reason into their understanding of things religious. For the biblical theologian to do this is entirely allowable; even more than this if the biblical theologian does this then this will profit the work of the biblical theologian. Kant urges the theologian (the biblical theologian) to take notice of what the philosopher has to say; not to do this is a sign of lack of thoroughness and results in the failure to bring about on their part an understanding of the whole of that thing which is religion. What Kant is doing here is intended to be the work of a philosopher, who has in his sights a religion of mere reason, but who has been able to take such an overview of ways of treating religion that he is able to distinguish between the work of the biblical theologian and the work of the philosophical theologian and has been

able, then, purposively to delimit what he is doing to be restrained within the philosophically understood religion within the bounds of reason alone.

In the preface to the second edition of the work Kant draws out the distinction between a religion of pure reason and revelation. Revelation, a religion of faith which includes the element of the historical, can contain within itself the pure religion of reason, but the religion of pure reason does not include within itself the domains of faith and of history and the world of experience. For this reason a religion of pure reason must not wander into the domains of faith and of history and cannot take notice of experience; it must not of itself wander out from its own domain into the wider domain which surrounds it. Thus the separation of these two forms of religion can be retained intact. However, if one takes the whole of a religion of revelation and takes out of it the elements of a religion of pure religion, then one finds that what still remains, the historical, when considered in terms of moral concepts leads one back to the system of religion of pure reason. Thus religion founded on Scripture and a religion of pure reason can be entirely compatible and can be seen as a unity. Thus what one says about one form of religion can be allowed to affect what one says about the other form of religion. This must be the case, Kant argues, because otherwise it would be necessary to imagine that in any particular human being these two forms of religion could exist alongside each other in one person, one person would have in themselves two religions.

For Kant we human beings as free agents are able, through our own reason, to bind ourselves to unconditioned laws and to live according to these laws; we are able to know and to do our duty. To know and to do our duty we ought to ignore the ends to which our actions will lead. However, says Kant, although the consideration of the ends of our actions plays no part in the knowledge of or the doing of our duty, our actions do have ends. We cannot be indifferent to the ends that arise out of the doing of our duty. An end does arise out of the living of the moral life; our reason is not indifferent to the demand that we should be able to direct our actions so that they are at least in harmony with the end to which all our actions will lead. The notion of the end to which all our actions leads is an idea which combines the duty we ought to do and the happiness to which the doing of this duty will lead; it is the idea of the highest good. For us to be able to propose this idea of the highest good we are driven to postulate a higher, moral, holy being, which combines these two elements of the idea of the highest good. This being, whose place may be justified entirely by our own reason, meets our natural needs to be able conceive of some final good to which our actions are directed and it makes it possible for us make moral decisions and to live the moral life. The idea of this being arises out of morality itself; it is not the foundation of morality but is itself founded on morality. For Kant, morality does not need religion but leads inevitably to religion. In religion morality is able to provide an extension of itself which brings together the formal conditions of duty and

the end to which that duty will lead, happiness in proportion to the doing of that duty; morality provides for itself the idea of a powerful lawgiver whose will for the ends of all things can and ought to be our will for ourselves. Morality leads inevitably to religion, to the idea of the highest good.

Human nature is in part good and in part evil. To explore the place of the highest good in our lives, and so the idea of religion, Kant examines the ways in which the principles of good and evil are to be related one to the other in our lives. Kant considers the way good and evil are in us. There is in us a predisposition for the good that is in us as part of the possibility of our nature; it is in us originally. There is also a propensity for evil in us, we are evil by nature. We are created good: we are created for good and we are predisposed to the good. How is the good that is in us originally to be restored? Kant admits the possibility that we might need some supernatural help for us to become good. He believes, however, that we have to make ourselves worthy of this help so that we may become good (2001b, p.88). For the original goodness to be restored to us there needs to be a restoration of the purity of the moral law in us. The existence of the moral law in us in all its purity will mean that we will adopt as a maxim the doing of duty merely for duty's sake. We may call ourselves virtuous when the firm resolve to do our duty and the constant practice of the performance of our duty have become habitual in us.

Religion can seek to encourage us to believe that we can become happy, that God will make us happy without our becoming in any way a better human being. Religion can also lead us to believe that we do indeed have to become a better human being in order for God to make us happy, but that we ourselves need to do nothing about becoming better beyond asking God to make us better. We need either to do nothing about becoming better or we need only to ask God to make us better human beings for it to become possible for us to be made happy by God. Religion understood in this way is a religion of mere worship, a religion that seeks only to encourage us to seek God's favours.

Religion may instead propose for us that we are required to do as much as we can for ourselves to make us better human beings; it may teach us that only when we have done all that we can to become better human beings are we properly entitled to hope that God can supply what we have not been able to do for ourselves. Religion understood in this way is a moral religion. The Christian religion, unlike all other religions, is precisely not a religion of mere worship but is a moral religion, a religion which depends upon and demands of us that in the conduct of our lives we seek of ourselves to become good (2001b, p.95).

Kant explores the question of the manner of our advancing from evil to goodness. Accepting the reality of evil in us and accepting that evil rules us, to approach and to achieve freedom from evil is our highest goal. Kant

seems to suggest that if we were to live alone as individuals we would be in little danger of living under the power of evil. Since we do live alongside each other, our presence with each other stirs up in us all manner of evil . If we are to achieve goodness, we shall be able to do so if we establish a human society which will be a kingdom of virtue. The kingdom of virtue is to be founded on the law of virtue; it will accept as its task and its duty the work of impressing, but by force of reason only, the laws of virtue on all human beings.

Human beings may be united within a political society and within an ethical society. Before we are united in these ways we are, with regard to each of them, in a state of nature. In the state of nature each individual makes laws for himself or herself, there is no external law to which we are all bound, there is no judge over us that we acknowledge and obey. We are capable of advancing from a state of nature into the society or state. In the political state we all stand under laws which govern us and which coerce us. In the ethical state we all stand alike not under laws which coerce us but only under the free duty of virtue (2001b, p.130). It is possible for us to live as individuals in an ethical state of nature. In this state we live in a condition of conflict; the good which is in us is endlessly under attack from the evil in us.. It is possible for us to leave behind this state of nature and to enter an ethical state. Membership of a political state is limited to one particular group of people; membership of the ethical state is open to all human beings because they are

united by the duties of virtue, duties of virtue which apply to all human beings, to the entire human race (88). In entering the ethical state we recognize the duties we have to other individuals and to the whole human race, duties which we cannot fulfil except by membership of an ethical state. In the ethical state human beings are united in a system of life founded on the laws of virtue which enables our search for the highest moral good. For such a union to come about we need to make use of one further idea, the idea of some higher moral being who is capable of so uniting all human individuals for one common purpose.

The concept of this ethical state is also the concept of a people of God united under ethical laws. For such an ethical state to come into being Kant believes that all the individuals in that state will need to be bound together and subject to one law, to be thought of as being the law given to us by one law giver. In the establishment of a political society the whole people itself is the law-giver and is able to set up an external legal control for its actions. In the political society the law which is proposed seeks only to deal with the legality of our actions, the outward elements of those actions. In the establishment of an ethical society law deals not with the outer matters of legality but with the inner matter of morality. The people as a whole, which is a public and outward reality, can only be concerned in its laws with the outward public reality, with legality as such. The people as a whole cannot, therefore, be the one to establish an inner moral law, they must come from someone else.

If these moral laws for the ethical state came originally from any superior being above it, then they would not be moral laws which governed the free exercise of virtue but could only be laws which sought to coerce the members of that state to submit to the duty of law of such a commanding higher being. Thus the laws which govern the ethical state, the laws which govern the exercise of the free duty of virtue, can only be *represented* as being the commands of this higher being . And further, these laws which govern the inner, the moral, can only be *represented* as emanating from a being who knows the innerness of human beings and who is concerned with this innerness; God, seen as the moral ruler of the world is such a being. In this way and for this reason the ethical state comes about and is properly to be called 'a people of God' (2001b, p.133).

We are not able of ourselves to form such a sublime ethical community; the foundation of such a people can only come from God. We are not, however, to abandon the search for a community, leaving it all to God; we are not to retreat into our private moral concerns leaving aside the concern for the moral condition of the whole of humanity. We need to do the opposite; knowing that the establishment of this state will come from God we are to behave as if its establishment depended totally upon us. We are to wish for God's coming but to prepare ourselves for the coming through the formation of a church. On the basis of a pure religious faith we can establish a universal church. On



the basis of an historical faith, founded in facts and not only pure religious faith, we can only establish a church limited by time and place, a church limited by our limited capacities to preach and proclaim the particular facts of that faith. We do not rely sufficiently on pure faith; our human weakness refuses to allow us to establish a church on pure faith alone.

Commonly we believe that we are required to offer to God some particular service. We know that worldly rulers demand particular service, demand to be glorified by their subjects.. We have come realise that our rulers seem incapable of ruling us if we do not accord them such particular service. Consequently when we approach the performance of duty we have come to treat this as the offering of some particular service to God, as a transaction in which we offer to God particular service so that he might rule us. This is the very foundation of all religion which is properly only a religion of divine worship. In such a religion we are concerned not with the inner moral worth of our actions but only with the simple fact that we are indeed offering these actions to God .

Kant urges on us a religion that is a moral religion. In a purely moral religion we understand that all that is required of us, all that God requires of us, is that we live a good moral life; in such a religion we know that 'steadfast zeal in the conduct of a morally good life is all that God requires of them to be his well-pleasing subjects in his Kingdom'(2001b, p.137). In

such a religion we are aware that when we fulfil any of our duties to ourselves or to others we are doing all that is required of us by God in the service of God. The religion of divine worship is mistaken in thinking we need to offer particular service to God for it is impossible to serve God in any other way than by doing our duty to ourselves and to others and in so doing offering our service to God. In all religion we are concerned to honour God.. What distinguishes religions one from the other is the way we think we can offer this honour to God. What is at issue, therefore, is the question of knowing how God wishes to be honoured.

We can all of us know, through our own reason, the way of the service of God which is the purely moral religion, a pure rational faith. It is through our own reason and through our consciousness of the moral law that we come to the very concept of God, a concept which needs to arise in us only because of the demands of the moral life itself. As the concept of God arises in this way for us, then any idea of a divine will, and of life lived according to this divine will, will allow us think of religion only as a purely moral religion. We may accept as a part of our religion particular laws and statutes laid down for us and on us by God which we are to obey. Knowledge of what God demands of us here will depend not on our reason alone but on particular revelation from God, revealed in particular forms in history and shared among us in the scriptures of traditions of a particular religious faith. However, even in such a religion of history and revelation and in the laws which are revealed in

concerning the will of God for us, the pure moral religion, which is written within all human beings, is the very condition of an historical religion of revelation. Whatever any historical faith may present for us it is really the pure rational faith, and not the historical faith, which constitutes religion.

For us to establish a statement of the way in which God desires to be honoured which is universally valid for all human beings we can only do so in purely moral terms. We cannot look to the demands laid on human beings by any particular laws or statutes for these laws must suppose some particular revelation and such a revelation, and so such laws, are not available to all human beings, cannot be applied to all human beings and are not universally binding on all human beings. It is only when we look at ourselves as citizens of some divine state on earth, when we become members of a church, only then do we seem to need not only what reason shows us, but also some particular laws and statutes which come to us not through reason but through revelation.

What might be said to be 'pure religion'?

'For in pure religious faith it all comes down to what constitutes the matter of the veneration of God, namely the observance in moral disposition of all duties as his commands' (2001b, p.138).

The religious faith which is the faith of a church is not pure religious faith; it is dependent on experience not on reason alone, it is a contingent faith.

Religious faith, the faith of a church, takes on many forms. Human beings

have tried to live according to these many forms of religious faith, finding each of them in turn to be inadequate. Still we ought to try new forms of religious faith which may avoid the mistakes of earlier forms of faith and which may be more adequate. If we are to take the religious faith of a church as the statement of what our duty is, we can only do so if we regard the statement of faith as the statement of divine law. We ought not to assume that a religious faith of any church is a statement of divine law, for if we do we are preserved from the need of improving the form of that faith. But likewise, we ought not to deny out of hand the possibility that perhaps the arrangement and order of any particular church do indeed come from some special divine origin and arrangement, if we are indeed able to find the way in which this religious faith is wholly in tune with pure moral religion itself.

We may find an expression of our uncertainty about the divine foundation of any church in the way in which we human beings establish for ourselves religions of divine worship. We need to believe that the laws of any religion which is not a pure moral faith have been given to us by God, are divine law, for otherwise they are simply arbitrary laws imposed on ourselves by ourselves. These divine laws of such a religion of divine worship supplement the law given to us in our pure moral faith; they do so by adding new demands on us over and above the demands of the pure moral law. These new demands require of us that we should offer direct veneration to God directly. Then we find that no longer are we concerned with the purely

moral purpose of all true religion but instead we are concerned with the pure worth of performing ceremonies and subscribing to the public confessions of faith not for their moral worth but only as a supposed act of direct service offered to God. Kant believes that all of these services supposedly offered directly to God have no intrinsic moral worth, are morally indifferent, though most of us believe that these services offered to God are especially valuable and especially pleasing to God. As we have struggled to establish a true moral state we have first engaged in religions of divine worship and only after this have we been able to proceed to a religion of pure moral faith. Although historically the religions of divine worship precede the religion of pure moral faith, morally the religion of pure moral faith surpasses any religion of divine worship. Whatever there may be contained in the religious faith of any church, not only in its the practices it orders but even in the doctrines of that faith, has no moral interest for Kant ; 'the moral improvement of human beings – constitutes the true end of all religion'(2001b, p.143).

Kant proposes that we direct our attention to the establishment of the true church, the establishment of the kingdom of God. This true church will be a universal church, a church founded only on pure faith, on the pure religion of reason. This pure faith is a faith which may be discovered by all and lived by all of us who possess the moral capacity for eternal happiness. This faith is one faith, it may be found in all faiths which are themselves moving

towards pure faith. Such a pure moral faith is free; it presupposes that all that is required of us is morally good disposition.

And what does Kant make of what he speaks of as of a religion in which the service of divine worship is offered?

‘The faith of a religion of service is, on the contrary, a *slavish* and mercenary faith (*fides mercenaria, servilis*) and cannot be considered as saving because it is not moral’ (2001b, p.146).

In any such religion we imagine falsely that we can make ourselves pleasing to God by acts of worship offered to God. Such acts of worship Kant finds both irksome and morally worthless; they are acts which proceed from fear or hope, they are acts which may be performed equally well by the morally good and the morally evil.

Kant proposes that in us there is the need and the duty that we have, for our moral advancement, to join ourselves to a community, to an ethical commonwealth. This commonwealth is a kingdom of God, a kingdom to be undertaken through religion. Since such a religion is and needs to involve our union in a state, since it is, therefore a public matter, it needs to find a public and visible representation in the form of a church. The church may be a visible church, a church with public doctrine, with formal external organization and with its own public officials. The church may also be an invisible church, without public doctrine, external organization or its own public officials; the religion of pure reason will only admit such a church as

this . In the religion which is the pure religion of reason we stand in the service of God as we regard the fulfilment of all our duties as the fulfilment of the divine commands; all 'among us who are 'right-thinking' are the servants of this church.

All churches whose bases are to be found in laws given and particular to that church can only become the true church so far as they advance towards pure rational faith; in so doing they abandon all historically particular faith and all historically particular laws. Churches who advance in such a manner are moving towards the offering of true service. All churches, and all servants of this church, who insist on the doctrines of that church and the laws it lays down are not advancing towards the real and true service but only towards the pseudo-service of the principle of the good.

We are reminded of Kant's fundamental understanding of the nature of religion: 'Religion is (subjectively considered) the recognition of all our duties as divine commands' (2001b, p.177). Kant points out the way in which by understanding religion in this way we are able to avoid two erroneous interpretations of the nature of religion. First, that in this understanding of religion we are not required to assert some positive knowledge of the being or existence of God; we need merely to make use of an idea of God to whom all our work towards the good may lead. Second, we are prevented from seeing religion as the domain of some special duties which we have directly towards

this God. To this last he adds: ' There are no particular duties toward God in a universal religion; for God cannot receive anything from us; we cannot act on him or for him'(2001b, p.177)

Kant's classification of the religions is made in two ways. First he classifies the religions according to their first origin: in this regard religion may be revealed religions or natural religions. Second he classifies the religions according to the means by which they may be shared with others: in this regard they may be natural religions or learned religions. Christian faith is, on the first count, a natural religion and, on the second, a learned religion. As a natural religion Christianity has the capacity to become a truly universal religion. Such a universal religion is a practical religion which may be attained by any of us. The founder of this church makes no claims on us other than the claims of pure reason. He lays before us no demands that we should observe the outward forms of any religious service, but only the inner pure moral disposition of our hearts; in this way we may please God. (2001b, p.181). He teaches us that we cannot evade our moral duty by offering some outer or churchly, ecclesiastical duty (2001b, p.182). The teachings, the commands, of the founder of this church provide us with our path to true goodness, true holiness; through him we are given 'precepts of holiness which we ought to pursue, and very pursuit of them is called virtue. In this way religion draws us to the true service of the good.



True religion offers us laws which may be revealed to us through pure reason. In the society of the church we are offered laws which are arbitrary and contingent laws proposed for us as by that church as divine law. When a church offers us these arbitrary laws, limited as they are to one community unlike the laws which come to us through pure reason, and when that church teaches us that these laws are essential to the true service of God, then this church is offering us religious illusion; to serve God in this way is not to offer true service but to offer pseudo-service to God . We can create a God for ourselves who may be served in an essentially undemanding manner. Now this God we create for ourselves we imagine can be served by all manner of particular observances and services: we imagine we may serve this God by sacrifices, festivals, penances, pilgrimages and many other particular acts of service. It often seems that we even believe that the more absurd and useless to ourselves these acts are the more they serve God. Offering these particular acts to God is deemed to be important, but even more so we imagine that the inner disposition, which is devotion, to serve God through these particular acts of service pleases God. For us to imagine that we serve God in any of these ways is simply to live with an illusion.

Kant sets out a principle to govern our estimation of the practices and observances of religion.

‘To begin with, I accept the following proposition as a principle requiring no proof: *Apart from a good life-conduct, anything which the human being supposes he can do to become well-pleasing to God is*

*mere religious delusion and counterfeit service of God.'* (2001b, p.190)

If we choose not to accept this principle then we will find ourselves offering particular services to God except the one thing we are to offer; all that we can offer is the moral disposition of the whole of our life. If we choose not to accept this principle it does not matter how seemingly subtle nor how seemingly coarse and unsubtle our offerings may be, they are all equally worthless, equally a matter of illusion. To imagine that we can serve God by these particular acts, through religious acts of worship indeed, is illusion and it is simply superstition. To this illusion we may add one further illusion which is even a 'kind of madness' (2001b, p.193). In the church it is sometimes said that not only can we serve God by the power of our very own nature, but that to this service we may add a service which comes to us not from ourselves but from God; to the service we may offer by nature we add the service we may offer through grace. But we can have no knowledge of realities such a grace, realities which are alleged to come to us from sources which lie beyond all our possible experience. Religious fanaticism is this illusion, imagining the possibility of our serving God not only by the means of our own nature but adding to this service the service which may be added to us from some power or means outside ourselves. This illusion, the fanatical religious illusion goes beyond even the illusion of superstition, for it is itself the 'moral death of the reason without which there can be no religion, because, like all morality on general, religion must be founded on principles'(2001b, p.194).

The pseudo-service of God is fostered, encouraged and demanded by those forms of the church and by those ministers who demand the performance of acts of service which have no moral value.. Such forms of church and its ministry, such 'clericalism', gives us a pseudoservice of God which is fetish worship. The true service of God resides wholly in the free moral service which we can offer: to come to this service is to come to true enlightenment (2001b, p.194).

The true and moral service of God is an inner and invisible 'service of the heart': '(it) can consist only in the disposition of obedience to all the true deities as divine commands, not in actions determined exclusively for God' (2001b, p.208). We can allow this statement of the true and moral service of God to take on concrete visual expression; then we picture ourselves doing our duty directly in the service of God. Kant admits the possible usefulness of this process of *picturing* ourselves doing our duty directly to God. But however useful this means of picturing our duty in this way may be it is a dangerous process; for we are then in danger of falling into believing that we really are offering direct service to God.

Four forms of the alleged service of God have falsely been treated as if they were truly the service of God. For each of these 'observances of duty' we have established some form of religious practice, some form of ritual acts or behaviour. The performance of these forms of ritual have then served to

awaken us to the doing of these supposed duties. Four forms of religious ritual have been used and seen in terms of the offering of service to God, as a matter of observing our duties: private prayer, church-going, initiation into the religion (in the Christian church in the rite of baptism) and the maintenance of that religion (in the Christian church in the ceremony of communion). These forms all have as their foundation the belief that they may become means for the furtherance of the moral good. But each of these rites, if we undertake them as means of making ourselves pleasing to God, is an illusion.

Private prayer may be thought of by us as the doing of an inner act of service to God and thus as a means of grace for us. Prayer seen in this way is simply a superstitious illusion: 'for it is only in the *declaring of a wish* to a being who has no need of any declaration regarding the inner disposition of the wisher, through which nothing is therefore accomplished nor is any of the duties incumbent on us as commands of God discharged; hence God is not really served'(2001b, p.210). All that we do need to have and to do is simply to desire to be pleasing to God in all our actions, to do all that we do as if it were being done in the service of God; this is the spirit of prayer, this should be in us continually. Kant maintains that the prayer taught by Jesus, 'The Teacher of the Gospel', is also concerned only with the true spirit of prayer.

'One finds nothing in it but the resolution to a good life-conduct which, when combined with the consciousness of our frailty carries

with it the standing wish to be a worthy member of the Kingdom of God' (2001b, p.210).

All that we need in prayer is the spirit of prayer. There is no need for us to offer any words or formulas of prayer; any words we may use only have any value in so far as they might encourage in us the spirit of prayer. As we deepen the moral life in us the words of prayer become unnecessary for then, in the deepening of our moral life, the spirit of prayer will advance. The grandeur of those matters we contemplate in our prayer may bring us to the mood of adoration, 'that sinking mood' which results in our own annihilation; they may instead bring us to a true elevation of our own moral life and moral determination. Prayer has to do solely with what has to do with our own moral improvement; we may falsely transform this prayer into our own humiliation believing in this that we are here to offer some particular and courtly service to God. Kant thinks that the words of prayer do have some value; we need to teach children set forms of prayer, not because the words of prayer are important, but because the correct spirit of prayer needs to be generated in each of us. The appropriate words need to be learned so that we may form a true understanding of prayer; without such an understanding we are in danger of 'producing nothing but hypocritical veneration of God instead of a practical service of him' (2001b, p.212).

The practice of church-going is the public and sensuous representation of the community of believers. Church-going is a practice which is valuable and

edifying for individuals and for the members of the church who are together members of one state. In church-going we need to avoid any form of activity which might of itself lead us to idolatry: so, for example, we need to avoid using prayers to God which in any way personify God and the mercy of God. When we imagine that we can use church-going as a means of grace, as a means by which we can win some special favour from God, then we are imagining what is an illusion. Such an illusion debases each and all of us concealing the true moral significance of what we are undertaking.

Initiation, that is for Christians baptism, is certainly a significant ceremony for in it we may commit ourselves and be committed to the moral development of ourselves as citizens of the state which is the church. It is not, and it is an illusion to think otherwise, a means of grace; to think of it as a means of grace is mere superstition. The ceremony of communion serves to broaden the minds of those who take part in it so that they are able to approach more and more the idea of 'cosmopolitan moral community'. But the purely churchly ceremony is no sense a means of grace, nor is it a ceremony to which God has attached any special favours; to believe otherwise is, once again, a matter of religious illusion which can only destroy the true spirit of religion .

All the illusions and deceptions of religion have one common basis. Having attributed three moral attributes to God, holiness, mercy and justice, we then habitually turn only to divine mercy forgetting divine holiness and divine

justice. We prefer to think of ourselves and to become favourites of God rather than true servants. The true servant of God attends to the doing of what is truly our duty. When we wish to avoid doing our true duty we seek instead to become favourites of God, imagining the failure to do what is truly our duty may be overlooked and all our failures atoned for us and made up for in us by the application of God's grace. So we try to show how much we respect God and the commands of God by all the business of religion instead of obeying the true commands of God. We busy ourselves with religious ceremonies believing that they are means by which we receive God's grace, believing that they are an essential part of religion itself or even the whole of religion. We busy ourselves with piety rather than virtue; true godliness can only exist where piety is combined with virtue. So much religion does not lead to our moral improvement. Jesus, the Teacher of the Gospel, shows us that true religion will be evidenced in goodness of life. So it is that we should seek for virtue not for grace; by seeking virtue we shall finally proceed to pardoning grace .

### *The Metaphysics of Morals*

At the conclusion of *The Metaphysics of Morals* of 1798 (1999) Kant considers the place of religion as he examines the proposition 'Religion as the doctrine of duties to God lies beyond the bounds of pure moral philosophy' (1999, p.598). Kant locates religion as an 'integral part of the general *doctrine*

*of duties* and, having done so seeks to lay down the boundaries of the religion which lies within this doctrine of duties. Thus he asks whether or not religion must lie wholly within the bounds of a purely philosophical morals.

Kant distinguishes two senses of religion: first, there is formal aspect of religion and second there is the material aspect of religion.

When we define religion formally as 'the sum of all duties as divine commands' then religion belongs to philosophical morals. In this sense religion is the relation to the idea of God, an idea that reason makes for itself. In this way religion is not yet a duty to a being outside ourselves, God, for although we have an idea of God we have still abstracted this idea from the real existence of such a God. Duty in religion, when we consider religion from its formal aspect, is really duty of a human being towards himself.

But when we consider religion in its material aspect then we can talk about special duties to God. The knowledge of religion in this aspect cannot come from reason which is giving universal laws, it cannot be known a priori, it can only come from revealed religion. And this must depend also on the assumption not just of the idea of God but also of the assumption of the existence of God. Religion in this mode is no part of a purely philosophical morals, no matter how well grounded this might be. Religion as a doctrine of duties to God stands outside a purely philosophical ethics and belongs only to



revealed religion. For this reason Kant omits any such consideration from this work, for it lies outside and beyond the work of the philosopher, outside and beyond philosophical ethics itself.

We might then ask can we find a secure notion of duties to God inside revealed religion as it goes beyond the bounds of a purely philosophical ethics. Such a project would need to assume the existence of the being who is God, not merely as the idea we can use for the purposes of practical philosophy but also as 'something that could be set forth as given directly (or indirectly) in experience (1999, p.599).

Kant considers this possibility. He points us to the possibility of looking at 'Religion *within the Boundaries* of Mere Reason' which is not to be derived from reason alone but which can also take in the positive teachings of history and revelation and 'considers only the *harmony* of pure practical reason with these'. Such a religion would not be pure religion; such a religion would have no place in an ethics which is a pure practical philosophy but it would have a place in a religion which is applied to history and which, as such, is handed down to us.

## Post Kantian philosophers

### Hegel

Travelling from Kant and approaching Feuerbach it is good to turn aside briefly to the treatment Hegel gives to the notion of the 'cultus'. Hegel's notions do not lie with those who deny the value of prayer and worship. However, since Feuerbach, the next philosopher we must consider, draws so heavily on the system of Hegel, it is surely right at this point, to examine briefly what Hegel has to say about what he calls the 'cultus'. Hegel attaches some considerable importance to the notion of what he calls the 'cultus', indeed he offers a most positive and approving account of the role of the cultus.

Hegel, in *The Phenomenology of the Mind* (1949) gives a major role to the cultus in the uniting of the self to the divine being and in the realization by the divine being of itself.

'Here in the Cult, the self gives itself a consciousness of the Divine Being descending from its remoteness into it, and this Divine Being, which was formerly the unreal and merely objective, thereby receives the proper actuality of self-consciousness' (1949, p.720).

In the exercise of devotion, within which the cult is essentially contained, the self attains 'immediate pure satisfaction through and with itself', and, as the soul which is thereby purified, it attains oneness with absolute Being. Through this process the abstraction of absolute Being is cancelled while the purely actual itself is raised beyond its actuality into the universal. The Cult makes its beginning within this process in the act of making an offering of a

possession before absolute Being itself; and with this offering the divine substance implicitly sacrifices itself. Those who offer such devotion and who make such offering to God, receive gifts from a grateful God; the testifying to the honour of God and the presentation of a gift to God, will bring about for the nation which offers such devotion and which makes such offerings ‘the enjoyment of its own wealth and adornment’ (1949, p.724).

What Hegel establishes about the cult in *The Phenomenology of the Mind*, he expands in his treatment of the cultus in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. In these lectures he gives a similarly positive account of the role of the cult, of the exercise of devotion and of the making of offerings in the exercise of the cultus. Religion has a most exalted place here. Religion is

‘the region in which all the riddles of the world, all contradictions of thought, are resolved, and all griefs are healed, the region of eternal truth and eternal peace, of absolute satisfaction, of truth itself’ (1984a., p.83).

The object of religion is ‘the highest, the absolute, that which is absolutely true or the truth itself’ (1984a.,p.83). All thought has its centre in God and everything has its beginning and end in God; philosophy has God as its sole object. All human beings have a consciousness of God; the knowing of God and the feeling of God are the highest elements of human life, which is directed, in the end to the proclaiming of the honour and glory of God. Hegel finds that in his time there has been an abandonment of God by so many; his

purpose is, then, to reaffirm the possibility and the reality of a true knowledge of God. For Hegel the concept of religion has three moments: first there is the pure thought of religion, religion as it is an idea; second, there is the consciousness of religion; third there is the identity of these first and second moments, that is there is the cultus (1984a., p.142).

The cultus does belong essentially to the concept of religion (1984a., p.190). The essence of this notion of the cultus is this: 'it is the eternal relationship, the eternal process (of knowing) in which the subject posits itself as identical with its essence' (1984a. p.193). The cultus is 'faith and the witness of the spirit concerning its essence, concerning the spirit that has being in and for itself' (1984a., p.348). What lies within the cultus is essential for the life of the individual and the community: 'the veneration of God is the foundation of the true well-being of individuals, peoples, states, governments, etc.' (1984a., p.202). The cultus takes on three forms (1984a., p.446). First, there is devotion. In devotion the subject prays and becomes immersed in prayer. Devotion is an inwardness of the human spirit. Second, there are the external forms of cultus, all of which are held together under the notion of sacrifice. Third, there is the laying aside of ones own subjectivity in the inward offering of the heart to God; in this the one offering prayer and sacrifice is raised up to the domain of the purely spiritual.

However, what Hegel establishes in such glorious accounts of the role of the cultus, and of the role of devotion, sacrifice, and the offering of the heart to God he does not take it further into any more particular account of the place of prayer and worship offered to God. For all the significance he gives to the cultus he does not approach so directly as we wish to do the question of the possibly required character of the acts of prayer and worship to be offered to God.

### Ludwig Feuerbach

Van Harvey (1995) offers us a Feuerbach who believes in the necessity of listening to what ordinary believers have to say about religion. This Feuerbach finds that listening to what ordinary Christian believers have to say about religion they place prayer and worship right at the centre of their religion; this Feuerbach also finds that Christian theologians are deeply embarrassed by the concern of ordinary believers for prayer and worship, finding in this concern nothing other than naïve piety.

Ludwig Feuerbach proposes, in *The Essence of Christianity* (1957) to attempt translate the Christian religion into what he calls 'the language of plain speech' (1957, p.xxxiii). Inside this account, this translation, Feuerbach gives attention to the offering to God of prayer and worship.

Feuerbach proposes to examine the Christian faith through an ‘historical-philosophical analysis’ and not by means of a speculative account of the Christian faith. The truth of religion, for Feuerbach, may be found by letting religion speak for itself. When one listens to what Christian faith actually says one discovers that it is the way of the worship of humankind , even although speculative theology denies this. Christian faith makes God become human, a God who has a human form, with human feelings and human thoughts, and it makes this God the object of its worship.

Feuerbach proposes to examine the essence of Christianity from two points of view. First, from a positive point of view, as he examines the elements of the true essence of religion. Second, from the negative point of view, as he examines the false, or the ‘theological’ essence of religion.

Feuerbach gives attention to the offering to God of prayer and worship as he explores what he believes to be the true essence of the Christian religion. He points to the nature of prayer and worship as he explores the mystery of the Incarnation, the mystery of the suffering God, the significance of creation, the mystery of Christ and offers, as well, a direct exploration of prayer understood in terms of what might be seen as the omnipotence of feeling within the Christian religion.

God is first known as a being of the understanding; God is nothing other than the objective nature of the power of thinking whereby the human person is conscious of reason, of mind, of intelligence. God is known as a moral being, or as law itself; God is known as the morally perfect being. This God is nothing but the moral nature of the human person; this God is the perfection of the human will itself. God is known as an incarnate being; that is God is known as love, the being not of the understanding or the will, but as being 'of the heart' (1957, p.50). The significance of the Incarnation lies in the affirmation of the possibility in human life of pure sacrificial love which lacks self-interest. All religions presuppose an Incarnation of God.

This is to be seen in the offering to God of worship and of prayer. Religion assumes that the God who is addressed in worship is one who is not indifferent or alien to human needs, that this God is a human God. The practice of prayer involves the God who is addressed in human cares and distress. Prayer is the expression of the identity of God and the human person. In the practice of religion it is evident that the human person is placing himself in relation to his own nature; the human person learns to value his own nature as he contemplates the notion that the God he worships loves him, and values him, and makes him more and more loving; this is a matter of immense value to the human person for in it the human person realises his highest truth, his highest value which is love .

The God expressed in worship, whether an external worship or an inward spiritual worship, is the true God of man. The God worshipped by the heathens is a jubilant and sensual God. The God worshipped by Christians is a suffering God. Pure suffering, Christ, the 'God of all Christians', is the highest metaphysical thought and the supreme being of the human heart. Prayer addressed to this God, who is the sum of all human misery, is a true expression not of all religions but most certainly of the Christian religion. In this manner human beings making this prayer express their consciousness of suffering, of feeling, in the heart of the human person. In such religion human nature is reflected back to itself (1957, p.63).

What is the essence of Christian faith? Feuerbach writes: 'the essence of Christianity is the essence of human feeling' (1957, p.140). In prayer God is already a human being, who has sympathy for human sorrow and misery and grants the wishes of humankind. In Christ what is already there in prayer is fully realised because now at last the wishes of religion are realised as God becomes a real man. God becomes unlimited and pure human feeling made objective. God is such human feeling, such human wishing, 'the unrestricted omnipotence of feeling, prayer hearing itself, feeling perceiving itself, the echo of our cry of anguish' (1957, p.121). Human beings turn inward upon themselves and in the secret of their hearts express their deepest longings and their deepest desires.



Prayer lies at the heart of religion: 'The ultimate essence of religion is revealed by the simplest act of religion – prayer' (1957, p.122). In speaking to God so directly, as 'Thou', human beings are declaring that God is their alter ego. In prayer human beings express their deepest thoughts and longings confident that they will be heard by a being who listens to them: prayer is 'the wish of the heart expressed with confidence in its fulfilment' (1957, p.122). Human beings who engage in prayer put aside the world and its reality, put aside the ordinary causal processes of human effort bringing about human achievement and instead they make their wishes the objects of an almighty being who can enable them to be answered in full; in this manner and not by the ordinary actions of human beings acting in the world the world itself is changed. Prayer is a most significant activity.

'Prayer is the absolute relation of the human heart to itself, to its own nature; in prayer, man forgets that there exists a limit to his wishes, and he is happy in this forgetfulness' (1957, p.123).

Prayer is founded in an unconditional trust of the human being in the all powerful character of goodness which makes the impossible possible.

'In prayer man turns to the Omnipotence of Goodness; -which simply means, that in prayer man adores his own heart, regards his own feelings as absolute' (1957, p.125).

Feuerbach examines Christianity from the negative point of view, as he examines the false, or what he calls the 'theological' essence of religion. In religion human beings lay aside their dependence on the real and ordinary workings of Nature and apply directly to God; in this way they withdraw from and attempt to go beyond and to replace what is truly signified by their engagement with God, their real engagement with Nature and with the ordinary causal relationships which operate within Nature. The God of religion understood in this manner is an entirely empty God who explains nothing, who is the 'night of theory', who is the ignorance 'which solves all doubt by repressing it', for the mother of such religion is darkness (1957, p.193). In prayer human beings can set aside an engagement with the ordinary forces of Nature and go directly to the invocation of the divine. In this way in the workings out of religion human beings seek to go round an engagement with natural ways and means and to seek instead directly supernatural means and powers to change the given world, to effect changes in Nature itself; in this way the religious have constant recourse not to work with the world but with the world of constant miracle. Praying understood in this way is in reality the subjugation of Nature, the nullifying of Nature in the light of human wants and needs, and an act of supreme utilitarian egoism.

What are we left with in Feuerbach's account of religion? We are left with the need to raise ourselves above Christianity, above all religion. The great turning point in history Feuerbach announces will come as human beings accept and announce that the consciousness of God is nothing other than the consciousness of the human species. It will come as human beings in attempting to engage with other human beings with more than their own individuality, engage properly with the ordinary laws which operate in the real world. It will come when human beings accept that the personal power they can invoke and work with is human nature and that there is no other power they can invoke, 'no other essence which man can think, dream of, imagine, feel, believe in, wish for, love and adore as the *absolute* than the essence of human nature itself' (1957, p.270). In religion human beings take their thankfulness, their gratitude and offer it to God, often enough they do this in the form of sacrifice; the result of this is that human beings do not offer their thanks to those to whom thanks is really due, to their fellow human beings (1957, p.272). It surely follows then, from what Feuerbach says here, that the attention human beings pay to God, the thankfulness they offer to God, needs now to be given to the very essence of humanness itself.

I take from Feuerbach his firm insistence that in the offering of prayer and worship to God we are in truth engaging with the very reality of humanity itself and only with that; the failure to recognise this results in a lack of true attention to and gratitude to our fellow human beings. The first part of *The Essence of Christianity* leads us to treasure the activities of offering prayer and worship to God while, at the same time driving us to a true realisation of what we are really doing in prayer and worship. The second part of *The Essence of Christianity* urges us to go forward from the new understanding we have now gained, avoiding the profoundly unhelpful illusion that in prayer and worship we are truly offering such prayer and worship to God and arriving at a true engagement with the human species and a true gratitude to others for what we have received.

## Durkheim and Sharpe

Finally in this history I take a step forward to look at two twentieth century texts which serve to show us just how far prayer and worship have been abandoned, lost, and left behind for some voices, and I half suspect, for many voices.

Emile Durkheim's *Moral Education: A Study in the Application of the Sociology of Education* of 1925 (1961) offers us a fine example of how prayer and worship can be left behind. Durkheim's project in this work is to offer a secular morality which has left behind any residue of religion and is thus able to establish the foundation for a completely rational moral education which has left behind all and every element of any revealed religion (1961, p.19). He looks back to the history of what he calls 'primitive peoples', to a morality which is a morality of 'undeveloped societies'. Among what Durkheim calls 'primitive peoples' morality is essentially a religious morality. In such a human morality the doing of one's duty is important but the duty which binds human beings is the duty not to others nor to the self but to God. Thus in such societies the principal obligations laid on human beings are 'to accomplish meticulously prescribed rites to give to the Gods what is their due' (1961, p.6). The duties of religion and the duties of the moral life here are both of concerned with morally obligatory practices at the centre of which stands God (1961, p.8).

As human society develops human beings discover more and more duties which bind them and which tend to become human duties to other human beings. Christian faith teaches us that there are duties to God to be fulfilled but that the principal duty of the human being towards God is to love one's neighbour. In Christian faith there are still direct duties human beings owe to God, religious duties, but these duties become less and less significant as the duties towards other human beings grow and increase.

The removal of the religious elements and then the removal of religious foundations for a moral system were, at first, parts of a negative process. Now Durkheim wishes to move beyond the negative into a new positive morality which, in losing its religious foundations, loses none of its necessary moral depth. This he hopes to do so by disengaging true moral principles from their disguised state within a religiously founded and expressed morality.

Thus Durkheim takes it as a given that the abandonment of the notion of religious duties, the abandonment of the need to offer meticulously performed religious ceremonies has occurred in favour of an ever increasing concern for the performance of duties to other human beings and that religion need play no part in the foundation of a morality suitable for his own time and, perhaps we might easily imagine to a an ever greater extent, in our time.

R.A. Sharpe *The Moral Case against Religious Belief* (1997) offers us a brief fine clear attack on religious belief in general and on any positive evaluation of prayer and worship in particular.

Sharpe takes up the concern that the moralist has for the knowledge of how to live the good life. He admits that Christians can indeed live the good life but that far from helping them to live the good life Christian faith places huge obstacles in their way, and lays great, and particularly Christian burdens, on them making the living of the good life even harder for them than for others. Hence Sharpe's desire to offer a moral case against religious belief, and more particularly, a moral case against Christian belief (1997, p.15).

Sharpe offers these words about the place of religion and the place of worship today:

‘Once God’s existence was part of common sense. But the place for religion in our lives and society has largely vanished, and the clock cannot be turned back. It is not that people do not believe and worship; they do, but religion has lost its confidence and its central place in our lives, and believers are on the defensive’ (1997, p.92).

Among the burdens laid on the Christian are the burdens laid on them of having to spend time and energy on religious activities such as offering prayer and attending acts of worship; these activities Sharpe finds boring and painful; from these activities, which Sharpe maintains make no sense, he wishes to move us onwards (1997, p.16). For Sharpe the rituals of religion have simply become passé (1997, p.62).

Sharpe makes worship one of the central features of religion. The offering of worship has become for many Christians more important than the daily living out of a life in which one tries to live well, one tries ones best to live a life full of charity, a life lacking in malice and unkindness (1997, p.23). Instead of this Christians have come to believe that their lives are to be lived for an end other than human kindness and charity, to live instead for the glory of God. Christians have come to believe that they will only flourish as human beings if they live for the greater glory of God, and for this reason offering constant worship to God, not only now but also for eternity. For Sharpe this insistence on doing all for the glory of God, and therefore of placing the worship of God in such a central place serves to taint the whole of one’s moral life for it



pushes into second place all other moral hopes and desires and takes away their own intrinsic value.

Sharpe takes apart the notion that God creates us with a given purpose, the purpose of glorifying God. That human life should have built into it such a given purpose takes away any real sense that human beings have the dignity of being able to act freely for ends they have chosen themselves. It gives us a morality of command, the command of the father that human beings are to act to glorify him (and will only flourish if they do).

Sharpe finds fault with the idea of any being who wants to be glorified, adored or worshipped. Any 'half decent person' would not have such a desire to be glorified; surely, he proposes, any God would want more not less than any such 'half decent person' (1997, p.29). Mature human beings might be glad to receive genuine praise from one whose praise is worth having. It makes no sense to Sharpe to imagine that any God would want to be worshipped by every human being.

'By parity of reasoning, God, who exceeds all human capacities and merits, can hardly be pleased by the adulation of the uncomprehending' (1997, p.29).

Mature human beings, likewise, have developed in such a way that they have no need of role models to look up to. The desire to have a God to look up to in worship is simply a matter of human immaturity.

Conclusions: That human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God

British philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries offer a firm affirmation of the requirement laid on human beings to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

For some of these philosophers it is not always easy to discern their precise interest in prayer and worship and their reasons for proposing that prayer and worship are required of human beings. Hobbes and Locke in particular display a keen interest in the significance of prayer and worship for the good of the nation. They both show a very sharp concern for the need they see for a nation to establish a common agreement about public worship so that the unity of the nation can be established and preserved. It could be suggested that neither Hobbes nor Locke has a pure concern for the question we are posing. In particular we might wish to urge that Hobbes and Locke are really interested in the peace of the nation and, perhaps, their own safety within that nation. This might indeed be the case. But even if this is true it does not gainsay the possibility that their approach to prayer and worship is also offered seriously and earnestly.

In what terms do these philosophers locate the requirement laid on human beings to offer prayer and worship to God?

Among these philosophers this requirement is set out in terms of principles and laws. There is a common tendency among these philosophers to locate this requirement in terms of natural principles which arise in us, as a part of our very nature and in terms of precepts and a law which is established in this manner. Lord Herbert locates the requirement to offer worship to God by looking into the faculties of our souls and finding there sure and certain universal truths which require of all of us to worship God. Hobbes locates this requirement within the demands of the precepts of reason. More locates the requirement within the dictates of divine revelation but, then, because he proposes that recourse to divine revelation has become fragile in his own time, he locates the requirements within the demands of right reason and within the passions of the soul. More talks about this also in terms of the life of virtue and in terms of what he calls the 'Laws of virtue'. Locke is most anxious not to locate the requirement within laws or principles which are innate in the soul; having set this possibility aside, however, he makes the offering of worship coherent for us and required in us once any of us has understood the very meaning of the terms 'worship' and 'God' and he makes it so required of us once we become aware of what he calls an 'obligation of the heart'. But Locke also points to the location of this requirement within the revealed law of God, as it is found within Holy Scripture. Hutcheson

proposes that the requirement to offer worship to God can be located in terms of principles which arise through the inward knowledge of the heart of all rational creatures. Butler relates the requirement to offer worship to the natural knowledge of a moral law within us; although what arises in us through our nature does require us to offer worship to God it is not able to require us to worship God as trinity, for the knowledge of God as trinity comes to us not through principles of natural knowledge but only through the revealed knowledge of God. For Price the knowledge of this requirement is intuitively perceived by us. Reid places this requirement within the natural affections of the human heart. Hartley locates this requirement within natural affections of the human heart as well as within the direct commandments of the law of God.

Running through these approaches to prayer and worship is the notion that in some very obvious manner it is evident that human beings are indeed required to offer prayer and worship to God. Thus it is said that an examination of the faculties of our soul, the passions of our souls, the affections, obligations and affections of the heart reveals the universal truth that God is to be worshipped. But nowhere is this really established within any of the texts we have examined. Even more troubling is the notion that if we understand the words 'God' and 'worship' it will be evident that we are required to offer worship to God. To move from the mere acquaintance with or even a definition of

words to the notion that such acquaintance or definition shows us clearly our moral duty is at least open to serious question..

The requirement laid on us all to offer prayer and worship to God, framed in terms of natural knowledge and the natural affections of the heart, is also spelled out in terms of virtue. Thus More makes this a matter of the dutiful exercise of virtue, and especially of the virtue of piety. Thus Hutcheson makes this a matter of the exercise of virtue in the doing of what is our duty. Price makes the offering of worship a matter of the exercise of virtue.

The requirement is set out simply in terms of doing what is one's duty to do. For More the offering of prayer and worship to God is a matter of duty; for More the performance of that which is virtuous is the doing of one's duty for virtue is the doing of one's duty, the doing of the obligatory. Butler makes the offering of prayer and worship to the persons of the Trinity a matter of doing one's duty to these divine persons. Price makes the exercise of virtue the exercise of our duty; human beings have a simple duty to offer worship to God; human beings are even said to perceive intuitively the demand of this simple duty. Reid lays a simple duty on human beings and on the state to offer prayer and worship to God.

What precisely do these philosophers propose is required of us? More lays a requirement on us to offer private prayer to God. He also lays a requirement on us to offer public prayer, and public worship that is orderly and in accordance with public law and which reflects our own private prayer. More believes that God has a right to prayer and worship; those who neglect to offer prayer and worship to God cause insult and injury to God. Locke has it that both private prayer and public worship are required of us. Hutcheson proposes that all human beings must engage in a rich life of offering praise and thanksgiving to God, both in worship within us and in worship expressed in public. But More also insists that not only are prayer and worship required of us engagement in the fulfilment of this requirement is a deep, a sublime joy in us. Butler lays on us all the requirement to offer both private prayer and public worship but he gives primacy of place to inner devotion rather than on public worship. Price lays a requirement on all to offer a rich life of prayer in which we all express our love of God and our submission before him. Reid lays on us a requirement to offer a rich life of prayer to God, a life of the constant awareness of God; he is particularly anxious to defend the place of prayer in our lives against those who suggest that prayer is only suitable for ‘monks and old women’. Hartley calls us all to live a rich and fervent life of prayer and worship.

Alongside these philosophers that I have considered there is a line of three interconnected works of Christian spirituality, all three of which emphasize that human beings are required, that human beings have a duty laid on them, to offer prayer and worship to God. Within these texts this requirement is laid on all of us in terms simply of a duty which arises in us from the demands of natural knowledge, from the commandments and in terms of the living out of a life of virtue. Within these texts there is also an emphasis that the offering of prayer and worship to God is not a matter of requirement but also a matter of real delight, of real pleasure. *The Complete Duty of Man* also declares that the failure to offer prayer and worship to God, especially within the Christian is a matter of immense importance, for this failure does immense damage to God and, further, that such a failure will be most severely punished by God.

Conclusions: From the affirmation that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God to the denial that human beings are so required

David Hume is the first turning point in our journey from the affirmation that all human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God to the denial of the notion that human beings are so required. Hume offers a sharply negative approach to the whole business of offering prayer and worship to God. Hume constructs his own history of religion. In the account of this history Hume points to the way in which so much time and effort has

been given over to a crude attempt to serve the Godhead directly by flattery and exaggeration in the offering of worship; even in a relatively sophisticated religious way of life the same crudity and vulgarity has been evident as human beings have still sought to serve God directly by offering prayer and worship. The result of the human attempt to serve God directly in this manner has been the furtherance of a profoundly unhealthy approach to the whole of life which has served to draw human beings away from true virtue towards the destruction of the dignity of human beings and the dignity and true dignity of the good and the sublime in human experience. For Hume human beings ought to be satisfied with living a life of virtue and doing their duty to other human beings, instead of which they insist on trying to find ways of serving God directly. If God is to be truly served at all, for Hume, this can only come as and when human beings seek to live a life of true virtue and by no other means.

However significant Hume is for the estimation of the validity and value of prayer and worship it is with Kant that the most significant turning away from a positive estimation of prayer and worship occurs.



Conclusions: The denial of the notion that human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God

In none of the commentaries on Kant that I have surveyed, and within the writings of Kant I have surveyed might I claim to find in Kant any very great warmth for religion. Palmquist alone among the commentaries urges on us the notion that Kant is simply encouraging a purified version of prayer and worship and not seeking to discourage engagement in the practice of prayer and worship. Palmquist alone seems to suggest that perhaps Kant although he did avoid public worship and the offering of outer prayer, prayers expressed in words, was truly a man of deep inner prayer, a man who engaged most truly in contemplative prayer.

But we have surely seen a Kant who finds much that is repulsive within the whole work of offering prayer and worship to God. Kant does value practice of prayer but only when it is truly an engagement in the inner spirit of prayer through which human beings stir up their own personal moral life. Words spoken in prayer only have value when they are used to instil the spirit of prayer. Public worship might be valuable when it is used to further the moral edification of the community of worshippers; to think that it does more than this is pure illusion. If we are to continue to offer prayer and worship to God we need in some way to deal with this disgust.

Prayer understood in one of the commonest ways it is understood, that is that prayer is a conversation with God, is, for Kant, absurd; it is absurd for us to imagine that we can indeed really engage in talking to God and having any real conversation with God. Kant provides us with his ultimate reason why we cannot have a conversation with God. He offers this explanation on several occasions. In *The Lectures on Ethics* Kant says that we cannot be said to intuit God and we cannot be said to have a conversation with what we cannot intuit. We cannot encounter God in any direct intuition. God can only be approached in faith and not by any form of direct intuition. In *The Critique of Pure Reason* Kant repeats the same fundamental point of view. Thus for Kant human beings can only intuit objects which come to us through our sensibility; through our senses we come to direct and immediate contact with the objects. Since God is not presented to us through our senses we cannot be said to have a direct and immediate intuitive encounter with God. We become aware that for any of us to question Kant's notion that we cannot talk with God because we cannot intuit God is an immense task, striking as it must do at the very foundations of Kant's whole understanding of the nature and the bounds of human knowledge. For Kant the offering of prayer and worship to God is not and cannot be a duty. There are no special duties that human beings have in which they are required to serve God in any direct manner, we cannot serve God directly for we cannot have any direct intuitive knowledge of God. God can only be served by our whole engagement in the moral life, by the performance of all duties as if they were duties we have towards God.

We have no duty to serve God directly by any form of prayer or worship. God does not require of us that we offer prayer and worship to him. We become aware that for any of us to question Kant's notion that we cannot talk with God because we cannot intuit God is an immense task, striking as it must do at the very foundations of Kant's whole understanding of the nature and the bounds of human knowledge.

Feuerbach treats religious faith, and, particularly Christian faith, with immense respect. However, he makes it clear, that what human beings might have taken to be a really existing divine being, with all of the qualities and attributes of such a divine being must be thought of as, in truth, humanity itself. Feuerbach makes prayer and worship intensely important matters but no longer truly matters of addressing the Godhead but rather ways in which human beings deal with their own human feelings, their deepest longings and desires. Feuerbach takes away from us any notion that human beings are truly and at all required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

Thus it is that it becomes a commonplace matter, sometimes formally argued for, as in Sharpe's text, and very often taken for granted, as for example in the Durkeim text I have considered, that no requirement at all to offer prayer and worship to God can truly to be imposed on any human beings whatsoever.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRAYER, WORSHIP AND REQUIREMENT: TWENTIETH AND TWENTY FIRST CENTURY PERSPECTIVES**

I turn to what the Christian Church, and, in particular, the Catholic Churches and the Church of England in the twentieth and twenty first centuries have to say about prayer and worship. I shall make use of a wide range of primary texts, liturgical, canonical, catechetical, magisterial, as well as texts of liturgical, spiritual and moral theology from this time. I shall draw out an account of some elements of what these texts have to say about prayer and worship. I shall then draw out an account of what these texts have to say about a requirement being laid on all or on some that acts of prayer and worship are to be offered to God.

In the exploration of twentieth and twenty first century texts I have limited myself to texts drawn from the Catholic and Anglican Churches. I have done this for two reasons. First, I have limited the scope of my enquiry because my original question arose from my own experience of the Catholic and Anglican

Churches. Second, and more significantly, I have limited the scope of my enquiry because in order to make progress with my question I knew I needed to limit the field of my enquiry in some way. Within a study of this size I knew I could not open up at all adequately texts drawn from the whole Church, Catholic and Protestant, Eastern as well as Western. Limiting it to traditions and resources I have myself lived, and know best, offered one way of limiting the scope of my study.

Alongside my study, there is space for an exploration of my question which draws on texts from other Christian traditions. One particularly rich set of texts is to be found within the traditions of the Reformed Churches. Thus Emil Brunner, most especially in *The Divine Imperative* (1932), Karl Barth, both in the *Church Dogmatics* (most especially in the *Church Dogmatics* III/4 of 1961) and in *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God According to the Teaching of the Reformation* (the Gifford Lectures for 1937 and 1938) and J.-J. von Allmen in his *Worship Its Theory and Practice* (1965) offer particularly rich examples of the notion that human beings are, in some way, required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

## CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN TEXTS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP

I shall open up here present day texts in the Catholic Church and the Church of England as authorized texts for use in public prayer and worship. In the Catholic Church *The Roman Missal* was issued in 1969; a new edition of the Missal has been issued but it awaits agreed translations into the vernacular languages; the Divine Office is found in a separate book, *The Divine Office* (1970). The Anglican Church in England uses two texts for public worship, *The Book of Common Prayer*(1662) and *Common Worship* (2000); there is also a provisional edition of a text for the Daily Office(2002).

*The General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (1973) reminds the members of Church that the celebration of the Eucharist is a matter of obedience to a command (1973, p.8) and that the way in which they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist involves a matter of demand. The conscious, active and full participation of the faithful both in body and in mind is something for which ‘the faithful have both the right and the duty by reason of their baptism’ (1973, p.15) Every member of the Church is called to take part in the celebration of the Mass; when the whole Church does this it brings the Church and the ‘entreaties of all mankind’ with it (1973, p.9). The Apostolic Constitution, *The Canticle of Praise* (1970) reminds those who have

the particular task of reciting the Divine Office that it is both a matter of duty and a source of spiritual help to them that they should so recite this prayer. *The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours* (in *The Divine Office*, 1974) places prayer among the first duties for members of the Church. The obligation to pray which is now laid upon us depends on the fact that Jesus commanded us to pray. The offering of prayer is itself of the essence of the Church. Private prayer is 'always necessary and to be commended'; public prayer, has however, a special significance, a special dignity. (1974, p. xxv). The words of Jesus instructing us 'about the need to pray continually and never lose heart' is urged upon members of the Church. All who take part in the celebration of the Divine Office are being given a share in the greatest honour which can be bestowed on them. All members of the Church are invited to celebrate this liturgy; ordained ministers have a particular 'mandate' to celebrate this liturgy. What the ordained minister does is to fulfil the duty which is the duty of the whole Church (1974, p. xxxv)



The preface to *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662) indicates the belief of its authors that what they were doing in bringing about changes in the worship and in issuing a new service book was done to further reverence, piety and devotion in the public worship of God and to enable those who worship God using this book to remember the duty they owe to God. (1969, p.9). In the text for the celebration of the Eucharist in *The Book of Common Prayer* there are three, hardly ever used, 'exhortations'. The first of these exhortations make particular reference to matters of duty. It reminds the congregation of a duty laid on them.

'Wherefore it is our duty to render most humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God our heavenly Father, for that he hath given his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy Sacrament' (1969, p.147).

The second exhortation calls the hearers not to refuse to attend the celebration of the Eucharist, for such refusal may 'provoke God's indignation against you' (1969, p.148).

'So it is your duty to receive the Communion, in remembrance of the sacrifice of his death, as he himself hath commanded: which if ye shall neglect to do, consider with yourselves how great injury ye do unto God, and how sore punishment hangeth over your heads for the same; when ye wilfully abstain from the Lord's Table, and separate from your brethren, who come to feed on the banquet of that most heavenly food.' (1969, pp148-149).

*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (2000) offers us a short preface to guide us in the use of this new book for worship.

Worship is said to lie at the centre of the life of the Church and the centre of humanity as it draws all humanity and all creation to God.

At the centre of the celebration of the Eucharist lies the eucharistic prayer. In the eucharistic prayers of the Catholic and Anglican Churches there is a constant affirmation that what the Christian is doing in this prayer is answering the call to fulfil a duty. Thus, for example, in *The Book of Common Prayer*, this prayer begins: 'It is very meet, right and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord. Holy, Father, Almighty, Everlasting Father' (1969, p.151). The eucharistic prayer in these Churches reminds those gathered for worship that the celebration of the Eucharist is a response to a command of Jesus and is a matter of offering to God what it is our duty to offer. After the reception of Communion there may be a prayer that refers again to the fulfilling of one's duty. So, for example, in *The Book of Common Prayer*, the priest prays that God may accept the offering of the lives of those who are present and who are partakers of the Holy Communion, as a 'reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice' as a sacrifice which is 'our bounden duty and service' (1969, p.154).

## STATEMENTS OF ECCLESTICAL LAW

### OF THE CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN CHURCHES ON PRAYER AND WORSHIP

#### Roman Catholic Canon Law: *The Code of Canon Law* (1983)

The Code of Canon Law lays down laws to guide the life of the members of the Church. The whole Christian people has laid upon it common obligations and rights. All members of the Church have a right to worship (Canon 214) (1983, p. 35). An obligation is imposed on the whole Christian people to provide the means to enable this worship.

'Christ's faithful have the obligation to provide for the needs of the Church, so that the Church has available to it those things which are necessary for divine worship' ( Canon 222) (1983, p.36).

Members of the clergy have very specific demands laid on them to pray to and to worship.

'Clerics have a special obligation to seek holiness in their lives' (Canon 276) (1983, p.47) 'They are to nourish their spiritual life at the twofold table of the sacred Scripture and the Eucharist; priests are therefore earnestly invited to offer the eucharistic Sacrifice daily, and deacons to participate daily in the offering' (Canon 276, 2/2) (1983, p. 47). 'Priests, and deacons aspiring to priesthood, are obliged to carry out the liturgy of the hours daily' (Canon 276 2/3) (1983, p.47).

The clergy are 'exhorted to engage regularly in mental prayer' (Canon 276 2/5) (1983, p.47).

The work of making holy the members of the Church is carried out most particularly in the public worship of the Church. In the liturgy a 'complete public worship is offered to God by the head and members of the mystical body of Christ' (Canon 834/1) (1983, p.154). The Code spells out the way every member of the Church is required to play a part in public worship on Sundays and on other Holy Days. Ordained ministers are to encourage the faith of the Church from which worship proceeds (Canon 836; 1983, p.154). Prayer sanctifies the Church. At the 'summit and the source of all worship and Christian life' is the Eucharist (Canon 897) (1983, p.165). Members of the Church are taught that they are to take an 'active part in the celebration of the most august Sacrifice of the Mass; they should receive the sacrament with great devotion and frequently, and should reverence it with the greatest adoration' (Canon 898) (1983, p.165). All members of the Church are obliged to receive Communion at least once a year (Canon 920) (1983, p.168). Attendance at the Eucharist, indeed the celebration of the Eucharist, is recommended more particularly for the clergy: 'Priests are to celebrate frequently. Indeed, daily celebration is earnestly recommended' (Canon 904) (1983; p. 166).

Anglican Canon Law: *The Canons of the Church of England* (2000)

A major part of the canon law of the Church of England is concerned with worship. Members of the Church are called to worship on Sundays.

'The Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday, is ever to be celebrated as a weekly memorial of our Lord's resurrection and kept according to God's holy will and pleasure, particularly by attendance at divine service, by deeds of charity, and by abstention from all unnecessary labour and business' (Canon B6.1) (2000, p.22).

Reverence and attention are to be given in the time of public worship (Canon B.9) (2000, p. 25). Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer and the Eucharist are to be offered in every parish church on Sundays and principal feast days (Canon B11 and B14) (2000, pp. 27-30). Holy Communion is to be received regularly 'It is the duty of all who are confirmed to receive the Holy Communion regularly, and especially at the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun' (Canon B15) (2000, p.33).

The ordained minister is particularly required to offer daily prayer and to take part in public worship.

'Every bishop, priest, and deacon is under obligation, not being let by sickness or some other urgent cause, to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly; and to celebrate the Holy Communion, or to be present thereat, on all Sundays and other principal Feast Days. He is also to be diligent in prayer and intercession, in examination of his conscience, and in the study of the holy Scriptures and other such studies as pertain to his ministerial duties' (Canon C26) (2000, p.112).

## PRAYER AND WORSHIP IN CATECHETICAL STATEMENTS OF THE CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN CHURCHES

One way in which the Church sets out its teaching formally is through the issuing of a catechism. The Catholic Church has recently issued a major new universal catechism, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1999), which has a great deal to say about prayer and worship. (All of the references to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* are here made to this 1999 edition of the Catechism. References are made here to the text first by paragraph and second by page numbers).

Public worship is the Church's participation in the prayer made by Christ to the Father in the Holy Spirit; it is the summit and the fount of all the work of the Church (1074; p. 245). The Church celebrates the work of Christ in the liturgy, pre-eminently through the celebration of the Eucharist (1166-1167; pp. 267-268). The Eucharist unites the believer to the worship of heaven (1326; p. 298) is celebrated because of the command of Christ (1356; p. 305), is thanksgiving and praise to the Father, a sacrificial memorial of Christ and his Body and a place of the presence of Christ to his Church. (1378-1382; pp. 310-311). The celebration of the Divine Office is the response of the Church to the exhortation 'to pray constantly' (1174-1178; pp. 269-270). All

Christians are called to worship God for in Baptism a character is given to the baptized which 'consecrates them for Christian religious worship' (1273; p. 288).

The moral life and the life of worship are one (2031; p. 440); morality has its source and summit in the celebration of the Eucharist (2031; p. 440). The moral life is the life of virtue. The virtue of justice 'consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbour'; justice towards God is 'the virtue of religion' (1807; p. 400). The theological virtues are the foundation of moral activity; the human virtues are rooted in these theological virtues. (1812-1813; p. 402). Law comes from God (1949; p. 425). Natural law is given to all human beings: 'The natural law, present in the heart of each man and established by reason, is universal in its precepts and its authority extends to all men' (1956; p. 426); it is immutable and permanent throughout history (1958; p. 427). We cannot perceive natural law clearly; grace and revelation are needed so that we can know moral truth with certainty (1960; p. 427). The Decalogue, in which the principal precepts of the natural law are expressed (1955; p. 426), sums up the Old Law (1962; p. 427). The New Law perfects the divine law; it is the grace of the Holy Spirit (1965-1966; p. 428). The New Law fulfils the commandments of the Old Law; it adds no new precepts governing external behaviour but seeks to reform the inner source of all human acts (1968; p. 429). The law of the Church, the 'Precepts of the Church' are 'obligatory in character'; they 'guarantee to the faithful the very

necessary minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort' (2041; p. 442). The first of these obligatory precepts governs worship: members of the Church are required to be present at the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist (2042; p. 442). Moral life is the human response to the love of God: 'It is the acknowledgement and homage given to God and a worship of thanksgiving' (2061-2062; p. 449).

The first of the Commandments directs us to worship God : 'God's first call and just demand is that man accept him and worship him' (2084; p. 453). This first commandment involves and demands faith, hope and charity (2086; p. 454); these virtues lead us to do to God what is required of us : 'The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity inform and give life to the moral virtues. Thus ; charity leads us to render to God what we owe to him in all justice. The *virtue of religion* disposes us to have this attitude' (2095; p. 456). The virtue of religion is expressed in adoration; prayer expresses the adoration which is demanded by the first commandment (2098; p. 456). Human beings are required to worship God: 'The duty of offering God genuine worship concerns man both individually and socially' (2105; p. 458).



The third commandment makes demands on us to worship God. What was once applied to the observance of the sabbath is now applied to Sunday worship.

‘The celebration of Sunday observes the moral commandment inscribed by nature in the human heart to render to God an outward, visible, public and regular worship’ (2176; p. 470).

Sunday is the 'foremost holy day of obligation in the universal Church'. Members of the Church are obliged to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist on all days of obligation. Deliberate failure to meet the demands of this obligation is a matter of grave sin (2181; p. 471).

Christian faith requires that Christians should pray (2558; p. 544). Prayer is the human activity of raising heart and mind to God (2559; p. 544). It is a gift from God (2560; p. 544). Prayer arises from the actions of God who calls out to human beings; it is a universal call to prayer which meets the essential human search for God (2566-2567; p. 546 ). The essential forms of prayer which are revealed in the Bible are normative for Christian prayer (2625; p. 559). Prayer finds a foundation in the liturgy. 'Prayer internalizes and assimilates the liturgy during and after its celebration' (2655; p. 565). Prayer is founded in faith, hope and love (2656-2558; p. 565).

The Catechism proposes that prayer is to be made constantly (2697; p. 574). But human beings are not able to pray all of the time unless they set aside

some particular times for prayer. Prayer needs to be involve the whole person.

'This need also corresponds to a divine requirement. God seeks worshippers in Spirit and in Truth, and consequently living prayer that rises from the depths of the soul. He also wants the external expression that associates the body with interior prayer, for it renders him that perfect homage which is his due' (2703; p. 575).

Prayer is a vital necessity for the Christian, says the Catechism.

'For it is impossible, utterly impossible, for the man who prays eagerly and invokes God ceaselessly ever to sin' ; St John Chrysostom, *Sermones de Anna* PG. 54, 666). 'Those who pray are certainly saved; those who do not pray are certainly damned' (2744; St Alphonsus Liguori, *Del gran mezzo della preghiera*)' (2744; p. 583).

The Church of England makes use of a number of, much less extensive, catechisms. the Catechism of *The Book of Common Prayer*, considers the demands of the Christian life, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the teaching of the Church on the Sacraments of the Church. The Catechism asks 'What dost thou chiefly learn by these Commandments?' (1969, p. 353) and answers: 'I learn two things: my duty towards God and my duty towards my Neighbour' (1969; p. 353). What is the duty that Christians have to God?

'My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy Name and his Word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.' (1969, p. 353).

Although this catechism lays duties to God on the Christian it also says that they are unable to fulfil these duties by their own power.

'Know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace; which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer' (1969, p. 354).

*The Revised Catechism* of 1962, sets out the ten commandments in terms of duty towards God and duty to neighbour. Part of that which is termed duty towards God is 'to worship him as the one and only true God', 'to reverence him in thought, word and deed' and to keep the Lord's day for worship, prayer and rest from work' (1962, pp. 8-9 ). The life of duty laid on the Christian itself demands that the Christian should pray to and should worship God (1962, p. 10).

One recent catechism, *The Common Catechism*, is unlike the others we have considered it comes not from one Church but from a group of theologians drawn from a range of Christian Churches. It was first published in 1973 and appeared in English translation in 1975. *The Common Catechism* has not been accorded any official status in the Roman Catholic Church nor in the Church of England; it cannot be taken to represent the official teaching of the Church in the way in which the other catechisms we have examined would claim to do.

This catechism recognizes the belief that Christians are, in some measure, required to pray to and to worship God. However, it shows an awareness that the whole proposal that prayer and worship are or may be required of us has become less than readily acceptable to many women and men of our time.

The catechism proposes that members of the Christian Church are called on to devote themselves to God and to their fellow human beings; devotion to God manifests itself in prayer, worship and the sacraments (1975, p. 348). Prayer and worship have been seen to be vital elements in the life of the Christian. The catechism recognizes, however, that the need to pray to or to worship God is no longer accepted by all.

'Any inquiry into prayer and worship must start with the fact that they are no longer self-evident. And by that we mean not only for non-Christians, but precisely for Christians themselves' (1975, p. 348).

The catechism asks why the need for prayer and worship is not self-evident in our times, and it sets out reasons why both Christians and non-Christians might reject the practices of prayer and worship. The catechism suggests that for some of us the time and the opportunity for prayer and worship might seem to us not to exist; prayer and worship appear to be unnecessary demands made on us and we all already live lives which are too full of pressures and demands. For others of us the practice of prayer and worship appear to be unhelpful attempts to escape from the demands of everyday life. For others of us still prayer and worship are dismissed because they depend upon an image of God which is not or is no longer sustainable in Christian faith. The image of prayer as a personal conversation with a personal God and perhaps with a powerful personal God collapses when this personal image of God is put into question.

'In short, does not God's transcendence, his absolute "otherness" forbid us to think of him as a person and to address him in the direct I-You form? Surely the Christian image of God forbids prayer?' (1975, p. 352).

This Catechism claims that living a Christian life necessitates the practice of prayer; the everyday character of faith points to the 'necessity' of the practice of regular prayer (1975, p. 359). However, even though worship and prayer are indeed necessary and even vital parts of our lives, the Catechism suggests that the language of duty is not the appropriate way to approach the place of prayer in the Christian life.

'It is obviously not appropriate to describe prayer as a "duty" or "obligation" ensuing from faith... But the necessity of prayer which we feel should not be disputed is not the inevitable result of a demand or duty. It is inevitable simply because it is the natural correlation of faith' (1975, p.360).

In a similar fashion the Catechism comments on worship.

'By worship we mean that the faithful gather together to reflect on what unites them as a Church. Duty cannot be the primary consideration here any more than it is the case of personal prayer.' (1975, p. 363).

Worship itself 'should not be regarded as a duty but as a gift of faith' (1975, p. 364).

## MAGISTERIAL STATEMENTS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### ON WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Over the last sixty years the Catholic Church has issued a series of doctrinal statements on prayer and worship. There are no comparable documents issued by the Church of England.

The encyclical letter of Pius XII on worship, *Mediator Dei* (1947) was issued in response to a renewal of interest in public worship in the Catholic Church. Pius XII adds his own call for the renewal of worship. Christian people are called to be one in 'professing the same faith, obeying the same law and taking part with one mind and will in the same sacrifice. The honour due to God requires it, and the needs of our time require it too.' (1947, p. 10). Pius XII, however, aims to reach beyond the Church to all humankind. In this time, at the end of World War II, 'all right-thinking men are doing their best to restore peace among nations'. The renewal of worship will help to bring about this peace.

'To this end nothing can be more conducive than to encourage that active and zealous spirit of religion which ought to animate every Christian: a spirit in which, sincerely embracing the same truths, freely obeying the same lawful Pastors, and offering to God the worship due to him, they form one community of brothers' (1947, p. 10).

*Mediator Dei* declares that all human beings are called to devote their lives to God: 'Man's chief duty undoubtedly is to devote himself and his life to God'

(1947, p.11). We have a duty, as individuals and as communities to offer worship to God.; this means 'to pay due worship and homage to the one true God by the virtue of religion' (1947, p. 11). *Mediator Dei* sets the duty laid on all human beings against the worship required by the Scriptures. This duty has been given a particular form in the Old Testament; God sets out rules to govern how people are to worship. This worship was still only a shadow of the worship Jesus offered. Jesus is the mediator between God and ourselves, restoring the order between God and humankind which was destroyed by sin. Jesus accomplished this work by proclamation, prayer and self-sacrifice. The work of Jesus is an act of worship 'which the High Priest of the New Testament was to offer to the heavenly Father' (14). Jesus 'wills the worship which He has inaugurated and which he has offered throughout His life on earth to be continued without ceasing' (1947, p.13). What is begun in Jesus is continued by the Church 'so that on this earth of our exile a great temple is daily in course of building, in which the divine majesty receives due and acceptable worship' (1947, p. 13).

Worship is to be external and internal. Human nature, body and soul, demands external worship (1947, p. 16). External worship of God is demanded of us because we live in societies, and worship is a duty of society.

'Furthermore divine worship is a duty for human society as such and not only for individuals; and how can religion be social unless it too has its external bonds and signs? (1947, p. 16).

There must also be internal worship of God the devotion of our lives to God. Internal worship is more important than external worship though both are required of us. What is most important, however, is that internal and external worship are connected one to the other, so that what we do externally expresses what is done internally. .

Devotion, the chief act of the virtue of religion, is the act by which we direct our whole lives to God, in which we devote ourselves to all that concerns the worship of God (1947, p.20). If we are to exercise the virtue of religion in devotion we need to sustain worship with meditation and with spiritual exercises. Our wills need to be dedicated to God; for our wills to be so dedicated they must be informed by acts of our intelligence, by the knowledge of 'the facts and reasons upon which the obligation of religion is based' (1947, p. 20).

*Mediator Dei* sets out an account of the duties laid on members of the Church to worship God and emphasises above all the worship offered in the Eucharist. In the Eucharist due worship and veneration is given to God (1947, p. 41); the celebration of the Eucharist is a matter of particular duty for the Christian. The giving of praise and thanksgiving in the celebration of the Mass is the offering of what is due to God by the members of the Church. The offering of the Mass as a 'daily hymn of praise and thanksgiving' is the recognition that this praise and thanksgiving is 'a debt which men owe to their Creator' (1947,



p. 36). All Christians are called to realise that 'it is their duty and highest privilege to take part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice; and to take part in it, not passively or negligently or with distracted mind, but with such active devotion as to be in closest union with the High Priest' (1947, p. 37). The public worship of the Church seeks to ensure continual union with God.

Christians are commanded to pray continually. The Church calls its members to obedience to this command (1947, p. 57). All members of the Church are encouraged to join in public prayer and, especially, in the prayers of the Office; for the clergy and for religious this prayer becomes an additional duty laid on them by the law of the Church (1947, p. 60).

*Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Abbott 1966) is one of the most important documents issued by the Second Vatican Council. The Council attaches huge significance to the public worship of the Church.

'The liturgy is thus the outstanding means by which the faithful can express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.' (1966, p. 137).

The Council locates worship within the history of salvation. In Christ the true worship of God is made possible, for in him human beings have been given the means of giving worthy worship to God (1966, p.139). The exercises the work of salvation in and through the liturgy (1966, p. 140). In baptism Christians are made 'true adorers'; in the Eucharist Christians gather

as true adorers to praise God.. The liturgy lies at the heart of the work of the Church.

'Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fountain from which all her power flows.' (1966, p. 142).

The work of the Church, calling all human beings into membership of the Church has as its purpose the bringing of all to worship.

'For the goal of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in her sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's Supper.' (1966, p. 142).

*Sacrosanctum Concilium* does not address the notion that all human beings are required to worship but it does propose that members of the Church do have such a duty. The full participation in the Church's liturgy by all the members of the Church is a matter of duty.

'Such participation by the Christian people as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a purchased people (1 Peter 2:9;cf 2:4-5) is their right and duty by reason of their baptism' (1966, p. 144).

Beyond the duty of baptized Christians to worship God, the Council affirms the existence of a duty laid on some members of the Church to offer prayer and worship to God through the Divine Office. Not only are ordained ministers and religious bound to recite this Divine Office every day, they are 'deputed for this purpose by Church ordinance' (1966, p. 163), and they fulfil

'a duty of the Church' in their offering of this daily prayer to God (1966, p. 163, p. 85).

*Veritatis Splendor* (1993) is not primarily concerned with prayer and worship. Pope John Paul II sets out a statement about the foundations of moral theology. In the context of the consideration of the moral life the encyclical is able to propose the requirement laid on us to pray to and to worship God. All human beings face, it is said, two ultimate and inescapable questions: "What must I do? How do I distinguish good from evil?" (1993, p. 4). The answers which the Church offers to these questions are claimed to be answers which are valid for all human beings. *Veritatis Splendor* considers the relationship between freedom and law and the relationship between conscience and truth. It offers an account of the place of natural law in the moral life and in moral theology. *Veritatis Splendor* sets out a statement of Christian moral teaching set particularly in terms of a defence of what it believes to be the correct understanding of freedom. *Veritatis Splendor* gives a central place to the role of law and the demands of the Commandments in its account of moral principles. It is concerned to defend the teaching of the Church against the rejection of 'the traditional doctrine regarding the natural law and the universality and permanent validity of its precepts' (1993, p. 7). It defends the place of the Commandments of God in the moral life believing that these Commandments can and must serve to guide our daily decisions (4). In these Commandments we are to find a statement of the nature of our true humanity

and an indication of the essential duties which are laid upon us (1993, p. 23). Given the major emphasis on the place of law and commandment in the moral life, what is noticeable is the slight attention paid to the role of the virtues in morality. The virtues do indeed have a place alongside 'the Covenant, the Commandments and charity' in an authentic Christian morality (1993, p. 125). The development of the virtues have a place in the transformation of the whole person which is founded on the love of God (1993, p. 94). *Veritatis Splendor* offers, however, no sustained working out of the place of the particular virtues in the moral life.

The encyclical is founded on a view of human nature which sees the purpose of human life in terms of the giving of glory to God.

'The Church, instructed by the Teacher's words, believes that man, made in the image of the Creator, redeemed by the Blood of Christ and made holy by the presence of the Holy Spirit, has as the ultimate purpose of his life to live "for the praise of God's glory" (cf. Eph 1:12) striving to make each of his actions reflect the splendour of that glory.' (1993, p.16).

The giving of glory to God, which, it is said, is the very purpose of the Church, demands of members of the Church that they are to worship God; the Commandments of God lay this demand on us.

'The statement that 'There is only one who is good' thus brings us back to the "first tablet" of the commandments, which calls us to acknowledge God as the one Lord of all and to worship him alone for his infinite holiness (cf. Ex 20:2-11)' (1993, p. 18).

The encyclical maintains that human beings are required to worship God but they are not able to offer in full measure the worship which is required of them. 'But if God alone is the Good, no human effort, not even the most rigorous observance of the commandments, succeeds in "fulfilling" the Law, that is, acknowledging the Lord as God and rendering him the worship due to him alone (cf. Mt 4:10).' (1993, 19) For *Veritatis Splendor* the natural law requires us to worship God.

'It is right and just, always and everywhere, to serve God, to render him the worship which is his due and to honour one's parents as they deserve.' (1993, p. 81).

Such a requirement is said to be a positive precept of the natural law. Positive precepts of the natural law, which order us to perform certain actions and to cultivate certain dispositions, are universal and permanent laws, universally binding and unchanging, they bind all human beings in every period of history (1993, p. 81).

*Veritatis Splendor* expresses its awareness of the difficulty many have in accepting that there can be and that there are immutable natural laws, objective norms for morality, valid for all human beings at all times of human history. It recognises the differences which the varieties of human cultures impose on human life, it accepts that there is a constant need to find ever more adequate ways of expressing the demands laid on human beings by the universal and unchanging moral law, but it maintains and defends the

existence of such universal and permanent laws for all human beings, in all cultures at all times in human history (1993, p. 53). Worship is more than a demand laid on us, however, it is the way by which human beings find freedom. Thus the encyclical maintains that Jesus teaches us that human freedom is to be founded only on the acceptance of the truth that makes us free. 'The true worshippers of God must thus worship him "in spirit and truth" (Jn 4:23): in this worship they become free. Worship of God and a relationship with truth are revealed in Jesus as the deepest foundation of freedom. (1993, p. 132).

In *Dies Domini* (1998) John Paul II calls on members of the Catholic Church to return to the weekly observance of Sunday. The encyclical itself is intended to help the members of the Church to 'recover the deep doctrinal foundations underlying the Church's precept, so that the abiding value of Sunday in the Christian life will be clear to all the faithful' (1998, p. 8). John Paul II is concerned that the observance of Sunday is fast disappearing. He rejoices in the fact that there are many places where the observance of Sunday is held to but he is concerned that the numbers of those attending the celebration of the Mass is in decline in many other parts of the world (1998, p.8) What is being lost, he says, is something which is required of the members of the Church, it is a matter of duty.

Sunday is the celebration of creation. Standing in the face of creation human beings feel awe which moves them to a sense of adoration of , admiration of and delight in God who brought all things into being from nothing (1998, p. 13). This celebration has grown out of the celebration of the Sabbath which is itself governed by a precept of the Decalogue, 'the ten words which represent the very pillars of the moral life inscribed on the human heart' (1998, p. 17). The whole of human life and every moment in that life is to become a place within which God is to be praised and thanked. In addition to that, special and particular times must be set aside for particular, explicit prayer; the relationship between all human beings and God demands such times of explicit prayer. Such particular, explicit times for prayer to God are provided in and through the celebration of Sunday. When human beings 'raise their song to God' they offer their own prayer to God but they also 'become the voice of all creation' (1998, p. 19).

Sunday is the day of the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit. In the earliest years of the Church Christians celebrated the Sabbath day and the Sunday. The celebration of creation on the Sabbath ceased as Sunday became the day of the celebration not of the first creation but of the new creation in Christ. Sunday became the 'supreme day of faith', a day for the gathering of the Church, a day for the celebration of faith in the celebration of the Eucharist. The encyclical terms Sunday the 'indispensable day'. 'What began as a spontaneous practice later became a juridically

sanctioned norm' (1998, p.34). Thus the celebration of the Sunday becomes a matter of doing what is required for the members of the Church.

Sunday is the day for the gathering of the Church at the Eucharist. Sunday and the celebration of the Eucharist become the centre of the life of the Church (1998, p. 36). The celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday is a place of faith, hope, love and unity and a place of joy. The celebration of the Eucharist is the offering of praise to God; all are called to take a part in this celebration of praise. At the celebration of the Eucharist on a Sunday there is an 'obligatory presence of the community' (1998, p. 39). Children are to be taught the obligatory nature of the precept that requires attendance at the celebration of the Mass (1988, p. 41). Attendance at the Eucharist by the members of the Church is matter of great importance.

'Even if in the earliest times it was not judged necessary to be prescriptive, the Church has not ceased to confirm this obligation of conscience, which rises from the inner need felt so strongly by the Christians of the first centuries. It was only later, faced with the half-heartedness or negligence of some, that the Church had to make explicit the duty to attend Sunday Mass; more often than not, this was done in the form of exhortation but at times the Church had to resort to specific canonical precepts' (1998, p. 55).

The requirement to go to Mass is a grave obligation laid on members of the Church to attend Mass which must be met unless there is a corresponding grave impediment preventing attendance at Mass.(1998, p. 63). Sunday observance remains a 'real obligation' (1998, p. 90). It is also a need which comes from the depths of Christian life; members of the Church cannot live out their Christian existence without regular attendance at Mass. Attendance



at the celebration of the Eucharist on a Sunday has to do with what human beings owe to God and with what human beings need for themselves.

‘The Eucharist is the full realization of the worship which humanity owes to God, and it cannot be compared to any other religious experience’ (1998, p. 90).

In the encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003) John Paul II emphasises the centrality of the celebration of the Eucharist to the life and work of the Church. He reminds members of the Church that they are called to attend the celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and on Holy Days and that the ordained priesthood is called to celebrate the Eucharist every day if at all possible. All members of the Church are called to desire the celebration of the Eucharist. When the Church is gathered to celebrate the Eucharist it proclaims the cosmic significance of this act, it is a celebration ‘on the altar of the world’ for it ‘embraces and permeates’ the whole of God’s creation..

The curial document on the Eucharist *Eucharistia: Fons et Culmen Vitae et Missionis Ecclesiae*, (2004) , sent out to all bishops in preparation for the 2005 synod , offers a vision of the Eucharist. It emphasises the sense in which in the celebration of the Eucharist creation is gathered by the Church around the altar and is there united . It emphasises the obligation laid on members of the Church to be present and to participate at the celebration of the Eucharist.. The Eucharist is said to celebrate and to extend across time the effects of the death and resurrection of Jesus; the Eucharist makes the

Church grow as it brings about salvation for its members. The celebration of the Eucharist is said to lie at the centre of the whole cosmos, of creation, of humanity, and it brings all of these to perfection as it brings the whole of earth and heaven together into unity . Within the celebration of the Eucharist all are called to offer full and conscious adoration of Christ. The celebration of the Eucharist transforms all who participate in it making them holy and serving to make them one with God, it advances the Church in love, it conquers death, it gives eternal life , it strengthens the Church in virtue, it gives meaning to life and it draws the whole Church and all human beings into new solidarity, into one life and one being .

#### PRAYER AND WORSHIP IN SOME TWENTIETH CENTURY

#### CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

In my first chapter I have already touched on a number of theologies of the liturgy as we sought to give some further substance to the notion of worship. I am now going to open up two further theologies of worship from the early part of the twentieth century, the first one Catholic and the second Anglican. I have chosen these two theologies because they both offer particularly rich theologies of worship and because they both help us to open up the notion that we are required to offer worship to God.

Dietrich von Hildebrand's in *Liturgy and Personality* (1943) bemoans the fact that all too often members of his Church have little real regard for public worship; the laity viewing public worship solely in terms of 'a mere duty of attending Holy Mass on Sundays' and the ordained priesthood seeing such worship all too often only as a matter of a duty they are obliged to perform. In this work he intends to stir up enthusiasm for worship. He begins with creation. The whole of creation 'exists only in order to imitate and glorify God inasmuch as it fulfils the divine idea in its regard and simultaneously unfolds the fullness of values to which it is ordained' (1943, p.11). The human person 'is called not only through his value to be an objective praise of God, like all the rest of creation, but also to a consciously accomplished glorification' (1943, p.12). Human beings, alone of all creation, are capable of making a 'conscious response to God's endless glory' (1943, p.12).

Von Hildebrand relates all values to the being of God and to the worship of that God. The human person is called to recognize and respond to all values and to see them as reflections of the being of God.

'He must first of all respond to each value as a reflection of God with joy in that which has value, with enthusiasm, respect, love; and above all he must adoringly love and lovingly adore God, who is the fullness of all values' (1943, p.12).

Not only are human beings called to glorify and adore God, but our own ultimate dignity consists precisely in our capacity to offer adoration and

glorification to God. Our search for value and for the good is inextricably bound up with our vocation to praise God.

'A person can never be good, if he does not desire the good, rejoice in it and love it. He cannot attain sanctification without adoring God, without loving Christ and bending his knee before Him' (1943, p.13).

Conversely, we cannot glorify God unless our life is in some way tending to perfection.

'The vocation to adore God and to glorify Him through conscious acts can be fulfilled by man only to the degree that all the central values are realized in him, and above all to the degree that he resembles Christ, that is to say is saintly' (1943, p.14).

The relationship between praise and perfection is again stated very sharply:

'The saint alone is capable of authentically praising God' (1943, p.16).

What are we required to offer to God? Von Hildebrand sets out this requirement in these terms.

'Not only do we owe God adoring love expressed, on the one hand, in the affirmation of all values and, on the other, in the immediate love of God, we also owe Him spoken praise, an uttered act of glorification' (1943, p.14).

He uses the concept of reverence to draw together his understanding of value, of religion and of Liturgy. Reverence is the basis of religion.

'Reverence is the essential basis for such a perception of values and for a true relationship with the whole realm of values, with what is above and what speaks from "above", with the Absolute, the supernatural and the divine. Reverence is the mother of all virtues, of all religion.' (1943, p.57).

The liturgy celebrated by the Church is entirely full of this spirit of reverence; it takes all those who engage in it into this spirit of reverence. In so doing it

establishes the only appropriate relationship between human beings and God. (1943, p.65). The apprehension of value and the giving of a response to value in liturgy involves some element of rendering what is due, what is due to that value itself. In so rendering this response the truth about the human person is shown and celebrated.

'One of the most essential elements of true personality is the consciousness that we owe to values a due response. By this the theocentric man is distinguished from the egocentric one.'(1943, p.76).

The Liturgy becomes a place for the expression of what is due both to the whole world of values and to God ( 1943, p.83). For von Hildebrand the person who is properly formed by participation in the liturgy will be able to offer a suitable response to every value in every situation, and will be able to do this not to satisfy themselves but simply because they can now recognize and rejoice in all of these values.

'Nor will it be on his part the fulfilment of a painful duty, but a spontaneous gift of himself to the value, a blissful acquiescence in the loveable beauty of the value, a gladdening submission to the Lord of what is said *Gustate et videte quod suavis est Dominus*, (O taste and see that the Lord is sweet). The person formed by the Liturgy will not ask himself whether he is obliged under sin to give this response. His entire value-responding attitude, his heart and spirit will be turned completely towards the world of values and God in the first place.' (1943, p.85).

The recognition and the offering of this duty is for von Hildebrand an objective demand which does not depend on human decision or feeling but it does accord with the deepest human inclination. The awareness of the world of values and finally of God, the fact that we owe a response of love and joy,

has nothing to do with any neutral feeling of duty that goes against the heart's inclination. Instead it is organically bound up with the longing for union with each thing that possesses value which speaks to us of the glory of God, and especially with the longing for union with God Himself.' (1943, p.86). Every value is of importance and requires our proper and due response; in every value there is a 'call which God addresses to us' (1943, p.95). The liturgy places values in some hierarchy and demands and provides the means by which these values may be addressed in their correct, in their adequate order:

What von Hildebrand calls 'spiritual awakeness' is for him 'one of the deepest marks of true personality' (1943, p.110); those who lack this 'awakeness' , do not recognize the demand made upon them to make a proper response to value, they are those who have 'not yet grasped the fact that a response is "due" to values' (1943, p.114) von Hildebrand believes that though we do not celebrate the liturgy with the primary purpose of becoming spiritually awake it is only the liturgy itself which can make us 'awake to the true world of the supernatural' (1943, p.128). The liturgy is a place in which this spiritual awakeness is shown and in which we can offer to God what is owed to God.

'The Liturgy, as it has previously been pointed out, is not performed in order to become awake, but only because we owe God adoration, glorification and thanksgiving, and because we must ask Him to grant us what we need for our salvation' (1943, p.125).

Evelyn Underhill's *Worship* (1936) is an exploration of 'those primary realities of man's relation to God which our devotional action is intended to express' (1936, p.7). Underhill considers the nature of worship.

'Worship in all its grades and kinds, is the response of the creature to the Eternal: nor need we limit this definition to the human sphere. There is a sense in which we may think of the whole life of the Universe, seen and unseen, conscious and unconscious, as an act of worship, glorifying its Origin, Sustainer and End.' (1936, p.13).

In worship there is a relationship between the worshipping subject and the object of worship; worship draws us out from the merely subjective into a relationship with what is objective, and indeed with what is transcendent. There is a universal human instinct to offer worship; human beings are 'driven to adore' (1936, p.14). In all worship there is a disclosure of the supernatural, an implicit vision of God. The Christian, and any 'religious' person, has to accept, says Underhill, that the making of worship is indeed a profound and serious human activity (1936, p.14).

Worship is evoked in us by God, by the objective reality of God; worship is the response of created reality to God, the meaning and purpose of all creation (1936, p.15). Human beings do not choose to acknowledge and respond to what is ultimately real and whole, to perfection, to the eternal, to God in worship but we find that we are compelled, even in spite of ourselves, to make this response to God (1936, p.17). There is no real physical necessity for human beings to worship and yet we are drawn irresistibly to worship by the eternal will of God (1936, p.20). In worship we make use of rituals and

ceremonies which touch the whole of human life, but these rituals and ceremonies have significance only so far as they touch the wholeness of human life and the reality of God. In worship we find evidence of the demand laid on us to make a proper response to God. 'For in these we see in its intense form the human soul's acknowledgement of an obligation to the hidden Perfect; the generous and disinterested - even though uncomprehended - response of the creature to the secret claim and incitement of God' (1936, p.22). Underhill believes that the Christian can see in all human worship some indication of the demand made on us to offer worship.

'Looking with reverence at this universal fact of worship, he will recognize, even in its humblest beginnings and strangest embodiments, some of the implicits of his faith. For first it means and seeks God alone. It is the complete fulfilment of the First Commandment.' (1936, p.26).

We need to offer worship using ritual and symbol, Underhill says, because we are social beings who have need of these shared social symbols and expressions. We cannot dispense with either internal or external worship, nor, indeed, can we really separate them off one from the other so that we might discard one or the other for 'it is not really possible for human creatures to set up a watertight compartment between visible and invisible, outward and inward worship.' (1936, p.34) The need for external worship cannot be denied, even though the place of external elements of worship in the whole life of worship opens us up to exaggerations and dangers.

'If the extreme ritualist is an artist interested in the acting that he loses sight of the total movement and intention of the play, the extreme formalist is a practical man, who acknowledges his religious



obligations and fulfils them in the cheapest and easiest way.' (1936, p.45).

Sacrifice is a particularly significant element of worship, which sums up the whole of worship, the whole of our relationship to God in worship. In sacrifice we have very particular evidence of the need we have to worship God.

'As man begins to wake up to the Reality over against him, there comes to him as the sequel to his sense of awe and dependence the feeling that he wants to offer something - indeed, must offer something - to the unseen Power.' (1936, p.56).

The suffering and death of Jesus is such an act of sacrifice, a supreme act of sacrifice, meeting the deepest and the greatest demands made on and obligations laid on human beings.

Worship must be offered, says Underhill, not only by the Christian individual but also by the community of Christians together, indeed the individual cannot worship God alone without the community: 'The Christian as such cannot fulfil his spiritual obligations in solitude' (1936, p.92).

The Eucharist is the central act of worship for the Christian; there is a very particular requirement and obligation laid on Christians to participate in the celebration of this act of worship (1936, p. 129). In this act of worship the Christian is only concerned with the service of God which it is their bounden duty to offer (1936, p. 137)

When Underhill turns from corporate worship to the matter of the personal worship of God, Underhill is equally clear that not only must the Christian participate in the offering of public worship in the Eucharist, they must also offer personal and daily worship, and this as a matter of duty. Christians are indeed required to worship God in the whole of their lives and to let this worship offered by the whole of life make all of life an act of worship.

'So the individual Christian is required to adore God, adhere to Him, and co-operate with Him in the sanctification of life - that is to say, the bringing of it into conformity with the Divine Perfection - and in the interests of this great purpose to give the colour of worship to every human action and desire whether overtly religious or not.' (1936, p.192).

#### PRAYER AND WORSHIP IN SOME TWENTIETH CENTURY

#### CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN APPROACHES TO PRAYER AND TO SPIRITUAL THEOLOGIES: THE MANUALS

Manuals of spirituality or spiritual theology were commonplace in the Catholic and the Anglican Churches in the early part of the twentieth century. In many senses these manuals and the way in which they approach spirituality have been left behind by the Church and by Christian theology; because of this I shall only offer a brief treatment of this manualist tradition. I shall consider here just two examples of these manuals, the first by Adolphe Tanquerey, a Catholic theologian, and the second by F.P. Harton, an Anglican

theologian; these manuals exercised considerable influence on the Church in the early part of the twentieth century. Even given the fact that these examples of the manualist tradition in spiritual theology have been left behind in the life of the Church, I believe that they still have interesting things to say about prayer and about the requirement laid on the Christian to offer prayer to God.

Adolphe Tanquerey's *The Spiritual Life* (1923) establishes a duty laid on all Christians to tend towards perfection and sets out the general means by which such perfection may be sought; the duty to pray to God is built upon the duty to tend towards perfection. The Christian has duties to the persons of the Trinity who dwell in the soul so that 'we ought to make it the object of frequent meditation - to walk inwardly with God' (1923, p.52). The Trinity gives rise to sentiments of adoration, love and imitation (1923, p.52). From the sentiment of adoration the Christian 'understands that being God's dwelling he ought to offer himself constantly as a sacrifice of praise unto the glory of the Triune God' (1923, p.53). The Christian living with an indwelling of the Trinity in the soul has a duty to tend to perfection (1923, pp176 -203). Prayer begins with the offering of homage to God: the offering of homage is the fulfilling of a fundamental duty (1923, p.244). The offering of homage to God, which is the duty of the Christian, includes 'adoration, thanksgiving and reparation' (244). The duty to offer prayer is variously necessary for the Christian: 'it is important that Christians should often join in common prayer

and worship' but 'the Church commits to her priests and religious the discharge of this grand duty of public prayer' (1923, p.249).

The second part of the treatise examines the ways to perfection, the purgative, the illuminative and the unitive and the forms of prayer which are related to these ways. Those on the purgative way, for example, need to be reminded of the necessity of prayer.

'It is evident that as creatures and as Christians we are bound to glorify God through adoration, thanksgiving and love' (1923, p.310).

Meditation for the beginner in prayer is itself to be concerned with duty: those who are beginners in the spiritual life must also choose for the subject of meditation all the positive duties of the Christian. Those in the illuminative way need, instead to enter 'affective prayer', in which devout affections predominate. (1923, p.461).

Tanquerey examines the role of the advancement of virtue in the spiritual life. He looks to the virtue of religion which 'makes us render to God the worship that is due to Him', although we are unable to offer to God the infinite homage to which God is entitled (1923, p.492). He offers us a definition of religion.

'Religion is a moral, supernatural virtue that inclines the will to render to God the worship due Him by reason of His infinite excellence and of His sovereign dominion over us' (1923, p.492).

Religion is not a theological virtue, but it does depend on these theological virtues; it is the most excellent of the moral virtues (1923, p.493). Tanquerey examines the question of the necessity of the virtue of religion. He lays a duty of giving glory to God on all human beings.

'It is to man, then, that the duty falls of consciously giving glory to God, of lending his heart and his voice to inanimate creation to render Him a free and rational homage' (1923, p.494).

The human person is to 'become creation's own high-priest'. The human person is required to praise God for himself.

'Man must praise God, above all, in his own name; for endowed with a higher perfection than irrational beings, created to the image and likeness of God, sharing in His life, man's life should be one of perpetual admiration, perpetual praise, worship, thanksgiving and love towards His Creator and sanctifier' (1923, p.494).

The rendering of the duty of worship depends on the cultivation of 'true devotion' which is itself a 'manifestation of love for God' (1923, p.495).

Tanquerey considers the place of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and, in particular, of the gift of piety. His definition of the nature of this gift of piety draws together the gift of piety, the virtue of justice and the virtue and duties of religion.

'This gift perfects the virtue of religion which is a virtue related to that of justice, by begetting in our hearts a filial affection for God and a tender devotion towards those persons and things consecrated to Him, in order to make us fulfil our religious duties with a holy joy' ( 1923, p.618).

The virtue of religion can, for Tanqueray, be acquired through human effort, but the gift of piety, which perfects religion and its acts, including its acts of prayer, cannot be acquired but can only be received by human beings from the Holy Spirit of God (1923, p.618).

F.P.Harton's manual *The Elements of the Spiritual Life* (1932) rejects the idea that what marks Christian life out from any other way of life is its particular understanding of morality and likewise the notion that it is some intellectual content or structure which defines what it is to live as a Christian. Instead, and this forms the basis of the whole of this manual, he believes that the particular essence of Christian faith depends on the nature of its spirituality, and, in particular, on the supernatural character of that spirituality.

In the consideration of the cardinal virtue of justice Harton finds the place to comment on the place of worship in human life. 'Towards God the virtue of Justice finds its expression in Worship. This is the primitive human reaction to any true apprehension of the divine; it is also the fundamental action of the most spiritual religion, because it is the fulfilment by the creature of his creaturely duty towards his Creator. Once God is realised as God, worship is seen to be His right, and this conception lies at the root of true religion,

expressed inwardly in adoration and outwardly in sacrifice and worship.'

(1932, p.65) Worship is a duty, more than a duty certainly, but still a duty.

'The man who worships merely because he conceives it to be his duty because of the paramount right of his Creator, has certainly not got very far in the practice of Christianity, but he has got somewhere, and this conception of duty is vital to religion; and, inflamed by Charity, informed by Faith and idealised by Hope, it will be the directing force of his whole life Godward.' (1932, p.65)

Among the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the gift of 'Godliness' (Harton's rendering of pietas).

'It may therefore be defined as adoration or devotion to God, resting upon that reverence based upon that respectful duty which the child owes to his parents and family' (1932, p.77).

Prayer and worship may be guided by and transformed by this gift.

'To the soul which is guided by the Gift of Godliness, adoration is the natural attitude towards God and the root and ground of its prayer, it is the loving response of the creature to the all-embracing love of its Creator; but that adoring response is not confined to the interior act of prayer, it passes into the exterior and common act of worship' (1932, p.77).

## PRAYER AND WORSHIP IN TWENTIETH AND TWENTY FIRST CENTURY CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN MORAL THEOLOGIES

Present day moral theology shows a profound concern for the place of prayer and worship in the moral life.. I shall now open up a number of twentieth and twenty first century moral theologies to show something of what they have to say about the role of prayer and worship in the life of every human being and

in the life of the Christian and to explore what they have to say about the notion that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

In one of the most recent statements of a Catholic systematic moral theology, Terence Kennedy (1996, 2002) considers the ascent of the human person to God. Worship takes on a most exalted place in the life of every human being; the organization of life so that we worship God is the ‘greatest human achievement’ of human life (1996, p.19). The worship of God becomes the transformation and the perfection of the moral life (2002, p.27). Kennedy proposes that the human experience of the world drives us to offer praise and worship to God. The human engagement in praise and worship offered to God is deepened by the commandments given to us by God. In the life of the Church worship lies at the very centre of its nature and its concerns.

‘To join the Church involves a faith commitment to the three aspects of her life summarised as creed, code and cult, or doctrine, law and liturgy’ (2002, p.36).

Commitment to Christ involves the adoption of worship in spirit and truth; the day to day life of the Christian is itself the ‘true sacrificial adoration of God’ (2002, p.36).

Sergio Bastaniel, in *Prayer in the Christian Moral Life* (1986), gives prayer the central role in the Christian search for personal integration. Human beings have a personal responsibility for making prayer. While it is true, he says, that



the whole of life may be seen as prayer, there is still a necessity for one to offer explicit and particular acts of prayer. There is a duty to pray to God but this duty is 'connected at root with the duty to care for one's own ethical responsibility' (1986, p.34). Bastaniel maintains there is a normative precept which requires the setting aside of time for prayer. Prayer becomes a matter of duty, in which one must provide 'for *adequate and sufficient* times of personal prayer with the aim of giving the unity of a believer to one's personal historical becoming' (1986, p.41). For Christians, there is a moral requirement laid on them to attend to the matter of offering acts of personal prayer (1986, p.48). Prayer is immensely important, it has a direct effect on moral goodness and an indirect effect on the capacity Christians have for an objective knowledge of the good and on their capacity to make the right choices in life. Bastaniel looks to the significance of public worship in the life of the Christian. Worship must involve the very hearts of the worshippers and must involve their own true assent to God (1986, p.72). Personal prayer makes true public worship possible and true public worship makes possible the living out of an authentic Christian life, of an authentic relationship with God. Above all public worship is expressed in the celebration of the Eucharist which points the believer to the whole task of living the moral life with a proper and due sense of responsibility (1986, p.86).

Bernard Häring offers us two major systematic moral theologies (each of these two in three volumes) *The Law of Christ* and *Free and Faithful in*

*Christ*. In both of these treatises there is a profound concern for the matter of offering prayer and worship to God.

In *The Law of Christ* Häring proposes to offer us a 'religious ethic', an ethic which is concerned with human responses to the being and the actions of God.

'Our moral life must be nourished entirely and utterly on the religious relation to God. Only if it is imbued with religion, centred in the religious, can morality be correctly judged' (1963a, p. 39).

Prayer plays a fundamental role in the whole of Häring's system. The whole life of religion depends on our reception of God's Word and on our response to that Word. Prayer and worship play a central role in the exercise of the virtue of religion. Häring makes this virtue sit between the theological virtues and the moral virtues. Religion needs to be distinguished from the theological virtues but, for Häring, it may not be seen apart from these theological virtues: 'it is focused on these divine virtues because by its very existence it must turn to God' (1963a, p. 46). The exercise of this virtue of religion is of huge significance in human life (1963a, p. 46). The offering to God of worship is a matter for the whole of creation; human beings have a very particular place in creation, enabling the whole of creation to offer worship to God.

'Man as intermediary between mere matter and pure spirit, man as microcosm, should lend to the voiceless jubilation of creation the rational utterance of praise, and in adoration and thanksgiving raise his voice to God' (1963a, p. 92).

Häring believes that human beings had an essentially priestly role in the original paradise state, offering worship to God for all creation. The fall from

this original state was the human refusal to engage in this priestly work, which was the vocation of human beings. This fall made human beings what Häring calls 'profane'; for this reason human beings became incapable of offering 'acceptable praise and worship to God' (1963a, p. 92). For this reason creation was made profane and incapable of offering the worship to God that had been offered through the priestly work of humankind. For Häring, it is the coming of Jesus that has changed this. In Christ creation has been given again the possibility of offering worship and human beings have been given a new consecration to fulfil their priestly task of offering worship to God. The work of Christ affects all human beings: 'in Him mankind is consecrated and admitted to filial cult in adoration and love and is assured of the acceptance of its worship' (1963a, p. 93). The duty of worshipping God is imposed on human beings who stand in the shadow of the divine majesty through the obligation of divine cult' (1963a, p. 93).

The perfect worship is offered to God by Jesus in and through his death on the cross; in this act Christ is said to re-dedicate creation and humankind to the worship of God. The whole of life and all of its demands and duties may be said to have become a place for the worship of God, 'the whole duty of man in the secular order must be looked upon as participation in the divine cult' (1963a, p. 94).

Law has a significant role to play in Häring's theology. The New law comes to human beings in and through Jesus. The acceptance of Christ and his New law draws human beings into a concern for worship. When human beings turn to Christ and find conversion and are baptised they are called to accept 'joyous participation in the familial celebration of worship (cult) in the Church' (1963a, p. 413). It is an essential part of this conversion to Christ that human beings accept the call to worship God.

'To return to Christ and His Church through baptism, sacrament of the divine home-coming implies, therefore, the honour, the right, the duty to orientate our whole life toward the glory of God in holy priestly cult and constantly to renew it through the liturgical realities' (1963a, p. 418).

The virtues play an important part in Häring's theology. He accepts the value of the account of the virtues derived he says from classical Greek philosophy. What he finds among the Greek philosophers he judges to be inadequate, however, because it lacked any concern for the worship of God (1963a, p. 485). The exercise of the virtue of religion is to be seen in the offering of honour and worship to God; human beings have a debt of honour to give to God. The paying of this debt will, however, lead human beings to a place of delight.

'The reverence of the creature for his Creator, of the child for God its Father, is due in the strictest sense of justice. It is a payment of a most absolute debt. The Christian will rejoice in the thought that for all eternity he will pay his debt of thanksgiving to God' (1963a, p. 524).

Häring maintains that worship plays a major role in the Bible for in its account of the life of the people of Israel it shows us how 'Israel was to experience uniquely how incomprehensible and exalted was the Lord, how absolute the

obligation on man's part to dedicate himself to the divine worship' (1963b, p. xxii). The Bible teaches us that salvation is connected with worship: 'man must seek his salvation entirely and utterly in the adoration and glorification of God' (1963b, p. xxvii). The fellowship with God, the participation in the life of God leaves Christian people with an 'obligation of adoration' (1963b, p. xxxiv).

Häring believes that the New Testament command to love God is to be seen in terms of the unity of the virtues of love and religion. The three theological virtues have as their summit the virtue of love; these virtues are then articulated in the virtue of religion (1963b, p. xxxiv). The theological virtues take on a controlling role in the Christian existence, guiding and directing all of the virtues. The virtue of religion is directed by the theological virtues. We have seen the way in which Thomas considers the virtue of religion as a 'potential part' of the virtue of justice. Häring believes that locating the virtue of religion within the virtue of justice is somewhat questionable.

'To subordinate the virtue of religion to the cardinal virtue of justice is in measure justified only if this cardinal virtue is not primarily looked upon as the justice which exists between man and man and concerned only with the order of material goods and rights. It is contrary to the sense of Sacred Scripture to look upon the virtue of religion as a mere appendage and extension of human justice' (1963a, p. 523).

The ultimate foundation for worship lies, for Häring, in the belief that the purpose of the creation and of redemption is the glory of God; the work of God demands from creation, loving adoration. In the offering of this worship

Jesus acts as the priest for creation. Christians share in the adoration that Christ offers. Christians have been given the full revelation of God in and through Christ; the reception of such revelation means that Christians have 'the most sacred duty to offer God the filial cult of adoring love' (1963b, p.111). Häring shows us how this worship is founded on a response to the revelation of the glory of God. The revelation of the glory of God in the Old Testament shows us how a human being 'must prostrate himself before God in praise and cult'; thus human beings must meet a 'demand for the response of adoration due to Him' (1963b, p.113). The work of Christ presented in the New Testament appears as the work of Christ as High Priest 'through whom and with whom we pay honour due to the Father' (1963b, p.115).

Häring believes in the primacy of the virtue of religion over all the moral virtues (1963b, p.127). All the moral virtues are directed to this virtue of religion and so they lead us to the honour and glory of God. The virtue of religion, which stands supreme over all the moral virtues, needs itself to be expressed in acts of worship, both internal and external. The offering of acts of worship to God is 'demanded by the very nature of man' (1963b, p. 127). It is the human vocation to offer worship to God; it is the very particular vocation of Christians to offer worship to God for Christians are further 'set apart absolutely for the unfathomably exalted cult of God in Christ' (1963b, p. 127).

The virtue of religion has two elements, inner devotion and external worship. Devotion is the heart of religion; it is the inner readiness of the will to dedicate oneself to the service of God. Devotion is the disposition of the self for worship. Such devotion Häring believes is only possible under the influence of divine love. This inner readiness of will is supported by a gift of the Holy Spirit of God, the gift of piety; this gift makes worship ‘warm and loving homage of a child for its heavenly Father’ (1963b, p. 129). Religion is also a matter of external worship. Worship needs to have external expression in external acts of worship, and this for a number of reasons. Thus, worship needs to be expressed externally because human beings as bodies as well as souls need such external worship to take in the whole of the self and because human beings need to express not only their own personal being but they also need to express their social being. Writing about the need for human beings to express in worship individual and corporate life Häring remarks: ‘Both bask in the sunlight of His majesty and are obliged to acknowledge Him and worship Him’ (1963b, p. 131).

Häring places within his consideration of the virtue of religion a treatment of the sacraments. Moral theology, says Häring, has to do with the exploration of the ways in which Christian people may live in imitation of Christ. The sacraments have an essential role to play in this imitation of Christ and so the sacraments have an essential place within moral theology. The imitation of Christ involves the participation of human beings in the mission of Christ, and

the mission of Christ was and is to offer worship to God. The sacraments give Christian people a share in the worship Christ offers. Christians are thus permanently consecrated to the worship of God; they are given a 'permanent share in the priestly, worshipping, being and activity of Christ and this obliges them to worship God'. Christians have a 'cultal duty' (1963b, p. 146).

Christian life is an imitation of the life of Jesus. Jesus was and is one who prays constantly; to imitate Christ it is necessary to pray. The union of the Christian with Christ can only be made secure through prayer and for this reason prayer is demanded of the Christian. Prayer is itself an act of the virtue of religion; it is one of the acts by which we pay God the worship due to God (1963b, p. 249). But prayer is more than just an act of the virtue of religion for it is the exercising of all the virtues above all of the theological virtues: 'Prayer gives expression to all three theological virtues, and they in turn through prayer become cult or the exercise of the virtue of religion' (1963b, p. 250).

Häring asks whether or not the offering of prayer to God is prescribed for all Christian people. Häring does not think that prayer is first of all to be viewed as a matter of obligation but because of the fallen state of human beings it is proper and helpful for the Church to require and to oblige its members to pray. Thus the Church can require of all its members a certain minimum of a life of prayer; it can and does also demand of some of its members a greater degree



prayer as a matter of requirement. The prayer demanded of human beings can be the saying of external words but it must be the offering of inner devotion. Not only must the Christian pray, the Christian has 'the obligation to strive for the perfection of prayer' (1963b, p. 267). The total neglect of prayer by the Christian is a matter of sin and may even be a matter of grave sin. The depth of the obligation laid on the Christian to pray may be seen in terms of demands which arise out of the 'relation of the child of God to his heavenly Father' (1963b, p. 268).

Häring explores the need for particular acts of worship. The whole of life may be and ought to be seen in terms of the service and the worship of God. But the offering of this worship to God, which will only be complete in the future kingdom of God, is incomplete now; human worship is now limited by the nature and the demands of space and time. Human beings in general, and even Christians in particular, suffer the constant danger of being 'completely immersed into the profane (into that which is not ordered to cult, that which is not encompassed by the virtue of religion) and the sinful unless holy hours and holy days enter into the rhythm of his time' (1963b, p. 297). In order that all time might become time for the worship of God it is said to be necessary that some particular times are given over to the worship of God so that they might transform the whole of life into worship.

Häring, locates the centre of all human worship in the act of worship which is achieved by Jesus in his death and resurrection. He sees the Eucharist in terms of the perpetual renewal of this one act of worship of Christ, and he places the Eucharist at the centre of the celebration of the Lord's Day. He proposes the notion that there is an obligation laid on all Christians to use the Lord's Day and the celebration of the Eucharist within it to make holy the whole of the week (1963b, p. 307). The celebration of the Lord's Day is the celebration of the sacrifice of Christ which is 'the most perfect expression of the virtue of religion' (1963b, p. 301). The celebration of the Eucharist is said to be the only means by which the Christian disciple can become drawn into the inner power and meaning of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus: the sacrificial death of Jesus is 'the obligatory norm of genuine discipleship' (1963b, p. 305).

Häring brings to his account of the celebration of the Lord's Day another note; what the Christian must do on the Lord's Day should become in time more a matter of joy than a matter of obligation. Häring finds great sadness in the way in which Sunday observance has descended to the level of a mere fulfilment of a commandment to attend Mass. The obligation to attend Mass is still a real obligation laid on the Christian. Where does Häring locate this obligation laid on the Christian?

‘As already noted, much more is involved in the observance of the Sunday rest than a mere law of the Church. A fortiori the obligation to assist at holy Mass is not merely a matter of ecclesiastical law. It is more than a requirement of natural law that a certain time be

reserved for divine worship. Here we are concerned with the very heart of the Christian life, with the necessary union with Jesus Christ our High Priest and the holy community which is His Church, a union which, growing constantly stronger and deeper, must be solemnly proclaimed to the world' (1963b, p. 313).

Although Häring urges that good pastoral leadership in the Church should try to encourage attendance at Mass as a joyful invitation, he still sets out what he should be taught in the Church about the minimum requirements regarding attendance at Mass by every member of the Church who has reached the age of seven. Häring is clear that the obligation to attend Mass is so firm that for a member of the Church to fail to attend Mass would be a matter of a failure in what is a matter of duty, would be to commit a grave sin (1963b, p. 314). Christians are bound to be present bodily at the celebration of the Mass on these days; even those who are excommunicate are bound by this by this requirement which is itself 'an obligation arising from the virtue of religion' (1963b, p. 316). The duty to be present at the celebration of the Eucharist demands not only bodily presence but also a degree of attention to what is being said and done. For Häring what he sees to be a divine precept to worship in spirit and in truth requires not only physical presence but also some degree of inner devotion.

The fulfilment of the requirement to offer worship and prayer to God has an essentially ecclesial nature: 'Only in the Church and in union with her can we please God by our praise and join in the prayer of praise by which Christ glorifies the Father. In fact if our piety is to be pleasing to God it must be ecclesial'. Häring does not deny that there may be true worshippers of God outside the bounds of the Catholic Church, but what he does claim is that in some way true worshippers of God are united to the worship offered by the Church.

'But everywhere God is worshipped in spirit and in truth a mysterious bond of fellowship with the priestly people of God, of the true Church, has been formed through the saving grace of God and the assent of man' (1967, p.157).

Häring offers a second systematic moral theology in *Free and Faithful in Christ*. Two matters need comment before we make an approach to what Häring has to say about prayer and worship in this text.

First, I shall look to what Häring has to say about the place of the virtues in moral theology. Häring offers a brief account of the way in which the cardinal virtues entered Christian teaching but were changed in the process. Thus writing on Ambrose, he shows how Ambrose, like others, 'adopted the system of the four cardinal virtues from Stoic ethics trying to give them an authentically Christian content' (1978, pp 39-40). He shows how Augustine took on this language of virtue but gave a new meaning to the virtues as he

integrated the four cardinal virtue into one great vision of the redeemed Christ-like love. Virtue in Augustine, says Häring, is simply nothing but the highest love of God. Häring declares his own unwillingness now to construct Christian moral theology on the basis of the four cardinal virtues: 'The four virtues are by no means characteristic of biblical ethics. They are taken from the Greek culture in a creative effort by the evangelizing Church to be faithful to the promptings of the Lord of history in that culture. The purpose was to bring home the valuable ethos of those who turned to Christ. However, the emphasis of the Bible is on the eschatological virtues' (1978, p.201). For Häring the biblical and eschatological virtues are not the four cardinal virtues but rather gratitude and humility, the creativity of hope, vigilance, serenity and joy: on these virtues he intends to build a Christian moral theology of the virtues. Häring argues that Christian morality has given a whole new direction to a morality founded on the virtues.

'The history of Catholic moral theology shows that the encounter of the Christian moral message of the Bible with an ethos of self-actualization by virtues could deeply transform the concept and style of virtues. They became a part of a living faith response to God, a part of the dedication to the Kingdom of God. But all too often, especially in the last centuries, under the impact of an individualistic culture, the morality of virtue practically forgot the central position of the eschatological virtues and centred instead on the idea of self-perfection' (1981, p. 235).

Second, Häring's comments here on the place of natural law. For Häring the use of the notion of natural law makes its appearance in the life of the Church principally in order to assist the process of evangelization (1978, p.316).

Häring, at the end of the first volume of this three volume moral theology offers a reflection on 'Freedom, Fidelity and Adoration'. He maintains that, though he has not spoken of worship and prayer directly, expressly and systematically in his general moral theology, what he terms 'adoration' has indeed been present throughout his moral theology. For Häring adoration is the very heart and centre of life and the greatest source of human freedom.

Häring seeks to bring together adoration, worship, the virtue of religion, the sacraments and the life of faith, hope and love (1978, p.471) Worship is said to affect the whole of the moral life (1978, p.479). Häring relates his understanding of worship to the person of Jesus as an act of freedom inspired by Christ.

'By revealing himself as the perfect adorer in spirit and truth, Christ does away with alienating disputes and rivalries between priestly castes and conflicting sacred moralities. He calls us all to be wholly consecrated to the honour of the Father and the service of his brothers and sisters (John 4/23-24). It is the privilege of the community of the disciples of Christ to respond to the absolute freedom manifested in the crucified God, by freely praising God with their whole life and proclaiming Jesus as their Lord through worship and through all their acts and attitudes' (1978, p.477).

For Häring, worship is called for in the Christian not by divine command but by the revelation of divine love (1978, p. 480). Worship as a privilege and an act of Christian freedom, but it is still an essential act: 'The spirit of adoration is not only an essential note of faith, hope and love; it also gives shape, direction and strength to all moral life' (1978, p.478).

Häring emphasizes the value and the freedom of worship. He comments on the way in which adoration of God is a response to the beauty of creation but is also a response by the whole of creation to God; for it is necessary that all things are caught up in the worship which the Son renders to the heavenly Father in and through the Church' (1979, p.109). He comments also on the way worship, and here most especially Eucharistic worship is always to be seen as an act of freedom. 'Legalistic manuals of moral theology treated the Eucharist only in the perspective of duties...For me the main moral question is, how could it ever happen that moralists, priests and lay people could consider the Eucharist primarily in a perspective of duty' (1979, p.133).

He accepts the language of requirement to worship but refuses to see this as the principal way for a Christian understanding of worship.

'Of course there is an obligation to participate regularly in the Eucharist but it is never an act of naked duty. It can be understood only by those who are evangelized, who understand and experience the joy of the Gospel, and therefore, hear the beautiful and urgent invitation of the Lord to repose before him, to be with him, to receive his total love and to join him in his reverent love' (1979, p.134).

Germain Grisez has produced, so far, three volumes of a major systematic moral theology, *The Way of the Lord Jesus Christ*; I shall be drawing on the first two volumes of this work, *Christian Moral Principles* (1983) and *Living A Christian Life* (1993).

In *Christian Moral Principles* (1983) Grisez denies the validity of what he calls 'scholastic natural law theory', arguing that this theory does indeed falter as it make an illicit logical leap from a given human nature to a law about what human beings ought or ought not to do. In its place Grisez offers a new natural law theory founded on the existence of normative existential principles. These principles are grounded in what Grisez proposes are the 'human goods'. Grisez maintains that there is a set of goods which are basic human goods and that one can establish a list of these goods by looking in and through the privations of human goods which, he maintains, mutilate these goods in human life (1983, p.123). He proposes seven categories of basic human good 'which perfect persons and contribute to their fulfilment, both as individuals and in communities' (1983, p. 124). Within this list one of the proposed goods is of particular interest in our study, this is what Grisez calls 'religion'. Religion, he maintains, is a great blessing; the human good of religion is the 'harmony with God which perfects human persons as persons'. This good Grisez speaks of in such a manner that it is to be related to the virtue of religion whose acts are religious acts, acts such as the offering to



God of prayer and sacrifice (1983, p.124). Religion, which is harmony with God, is to be seen as a fundamental good for human beings (1983, p.278). Without this good nothing else in life will go well. Religion is a good which can be recognized by all human beings. Once the revelation from God, which is recorded in the Hebrew Bible, has been given then it becomes clear that not only is religion one of the fundamental human goods but it then becomes clear that this good takes a place of primacy above all other human good (1983, p.511).

Central to the whole work of religion is the act of sacrifice, which is the making of a gift to God; in the celebration of the Eucharist the Christian offers, with Jesus, an act of true sacrifice. What is offered to God when a gift is given to God is praise and thanksgiving; the offering of such gifts to God by humankind is the offering to God of what is due to God, the offering to God of gifts which are due to be offered to God (1983, p.469).

Grisez speaks of the Christian life requiring perfection. He makes charity the central principle for the advancement of perfection and holiness in the Christian. The life of the Christian growing in perfection is to be 'shaped by prayer and organized by the sacraments' (1983, p.705). Friendship with God, the great good which is religion is to be furthered by a life of prayer, by an involvement in public worship and by an involvement in the celebration and

the reception of the Eucharist (1983, p.707). Prayer becomes the 'basic act of Christian life', the 'fundamental category of Christian life' (1983, p.709).

Grisez attaches a great deal of importance to the life of prayer which is the fundamental category of Christian action' (1983, p.705). He speaks of prayer as 'the Christian's side of divine human conversation' (1983, p.706). He maintains that prayer is necessary because it is divinely commanded (1983, p.707). It is divinely commanded because it is the response from human beings to God for what God has done.

'God's words and actions together give us himself in personal wholeness. Hence our side of the relationship requires prayer – the conversation with God who speaks to us in Scripture – just as much as it requires reception of the Eucharist' (1983, p.707).

Prayer ought not to be thought of as if it were hard labour or bitter medicine for it is a 'leisurely activity'; none the less it needs to be offered whether or not we feel like offering it for we are required to be conscientious about prayer and we are required to seek to do it well (1983, p.708).

Grisez places liturgical prayer at the centre of each Christian's prayer life. The liturgy he takes to be the worship offered to God by the Church; prayer is an integral part of that worship. Worship adds to prayer 'behaviour appropriate to complete - at least symbolically – the interpersonal communing of prayer' (1983, p.714). Given the central role in the life of the Christian that Grisez gives to the liturgical life of the Christian he is aware that it might

seem that personal prayer is no longer needed. But, he maintains, private prayer is necessary in the life of the Christian so that what is celebrated in the liturgy by all can become specific in and for the life of the individual Christian.

In *Living a Christian Life* (1993) Grisez examines the place of the theological virtues in the life of a Christian; within this context Grisez has a good deal to say about prayer and worship offered to God by the Christian.

The cultivation of faith, says Grisez, requires attention to prayer. Members of the Church are to deepen their faith by engagement in liturgical and in other prayer as individuals and as members together of the Church, to deepen this faith more particularly by making prayer of petition to God. Grisez considers the responsibility every human being has to worship God. He maintains that, because of who God is, what God does and what God promises.

‘Human reverence and worship are strictly due to God’ and that ‘each and every human person has strict obligation to give God the highest honour and to worship him’ (1993, p.62).

The requirement laid on all to worship God requires of us that we offer outward acts of worship to God, that we offer prayer, praise and sacrifice to God as we offer acts of thanksgiving, atonement and petition to God. Christians have a responsibility to hope. To enable them to fulfil this responsibility Christians are called to nurture their hope in God by meditation and they are called to sustain it by prayer. Meditation on ‘relevant truths of faith nurtures hope’ (1993, p. 88). The offering of particular prayers of petition spells out hope in the daily circumstances of life.

Grisez maintains that Christians have a responsibility to love God and to offer worship to God. On the foundation of faith and hope the Christian can express friendship for and love of God in worship. The primary act in which this loving worship is expressed is the Eucharist (1993, p.140). Christians are called to celebrate the Eucharist, and to do so devoutly (1993, p.141). They

are to participate consciously and attentively in the act of worship. Active participation in this act of worship involves an engagement of the will of the worshipper in worship; it involves both an inner willing to worship and an outer participation in the external acts of worship, 'making gestures, assuming postures, and joining in songs, responses, prayers, acclamations and, when it is made, the profession of faith' and it is to be done in a manner which is both 'earnest and meticulous' (1993, p.142). For the worshipper to be fully engaged in this act of worship not only should they be present but they should also themselves receive Communion; they should approach this reception of Communion with a clear conscience (that is after repentance and reconciliation where this is necessary) and they should do so with reverence. Grisez warns us of the dangers which can face members of the Church in their participation in the Eucharist; the requirement to offer worship to God means the avoidance of improper worship being offered to God. Members of the Church must be careful not to come to receive Communion in an unfit or sacrilegious state, they must not fail to observe the fast before receiving Communion and they must not fail to perform this act of worship in a manner which is laid down by the Church; failure with regard to these matters is in danger of becoming a matter of grave sin.

Grisez considers the nature of the requirement laid on all members of the Church to attend the celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and holy days.. Attendance at the celebration of the Eucharist is a requirement laid on all members of the Church. The requirement is not properly or perfectly fulfilled if the worshipper arrives late, or leaves early, or merely listens to a celebration of the Eucharist on the radio or listens and watches it on the television, or fails to pay attention, or if the worshipper should fall to sleep. Failure to attend the celebration of the Mass on Sundays or on Holy Days of Obligation without good and just cause may be a matter of grave sin; failure to participate fully in the celebration of the Mass may also be a matter of sin (though, comfortingly, one who merely dozes briefly during the celebration of the Mass might be said to have fulfilled the obligation substantially).

Grisez places the celebration of the Eucharist at the centre of Christian worship; alongside this central act of worship he places other ways of worship in the Church which can, like the Eucharist, express and foster love. Thus, he considers the use of the Divine Office, the recitation of which he recommends for all the members of the Church. Likewise, he encourages the development of individual and familial forms of devotion which can themselves help the Christian to worship God. Thus, he encourages the use of devotion to the Eucharist outside the time of the celebration of the Eucharist and he encourages the recitation of the Rosary.

Grisez makes extensive use of the writings of Thomas throughout this whole moral theology. However, Grisez does not set out a treatise on the moral virtue of religion within which prayer and worship might be located, although he does make use of the notion of religion, as a fundamental human good, as we have already seen. Equally Grisez does not build what he has to say about prayer and worship on the foundations of a treatise on law, natural or divine.

Now I shall turn from Catholic to Anglican moral theology. In my exploration of Catholic moral theology I have selected texts from the 1960's onwards. In this exploration of Anglican theology in the twentieth century I have to go back much earlier than this to pick up the work of Kenneth Kirk.

Kenneth Kirk offers a major contribution to the development of a modern Anglican moral theology. I shall open up three of Kirks's principal works of moral theology which make some reference to the life of prayer and worship.

First I look to Kenneth Kirk's *Some Principles of Moral Theology and their Applications* (1920) Kirk sees the work of moral theology in terms of the investigation of 'the ideal of character to which God desires each man to conform'(1920, p.8). The elaboration of this ideal of character may be set out in two ways, in a priori or in a posteriori lines. If the Christian ideal of character is set out in an a priori fashion it will be expressed mainly in terms

of duty, or as a 'system of divine law, having for its sanction the teaching of our Lord' (1920, p.10); it will recognize the 'absolute standard' of the Christian ideal. On the other hand, if the Christian ideal of character is set out in an a posteriori fashion it will be expressed in terms of virtue or excellence; it will recognize the 'infinite demands' of the Christian ideal. Such a system will be based on the cardinal and theological virtues. Kirk accepts that Christian ethics may proceed perfectly appropriately by either of these ways, suggests that Christian ethics usually combines both of these ways, but believes that 'the greatest Christian writers have with good reason preferred the second' (1920, p.11).

Kirk gives an account of the nature of the Christian character in terms of the cardinal virtues and the theological virtues. He relates the question of 'Christian character' to the person of Jesus and to the Holy Spirit. 'The Christian ideal of character, we have seen, is the person of Christ, as manifested in his earthly life' (1920, p.29). The whole work of the Christian is seen in the character of Christ: 'to love God and to serve Him; to love men and to serve them' (1920, p.30). Kirk believes that an account of Christian moral theology which proceeds by the examination of character, and so of virtue, and which avoids formulating the nature of the Christian vocation in terms of obedience to a 'formulated code of laws' is properly Christian and is 'true to the apostolic conception that liberty, not law, is the essence of the gospel' (1920, p.43). He does believe that 'Law has its place in the Christian life' but



that such Law is not the first proper basis for Christian life; 'the keynote of that life is the freedom of love, not the bondage of duty' (1920, p.43).

Kirk does still point, however, to the way in which Christian life does lay requirements on the Christian in terms of the performance of certain outward acts. The outward acts Kirk remarks on are 'first, such acts as lead to the receiving and maintaining of spiritual grace - prayer, the Eucharist, and the like; second such habits of 'faith working through love' as alone can give it outlet'; the principles requiring the performance of such acts should be 'recognised by the conscience of every Christian' (1920, p.184). He refers thus to the formulation of rules in ecclesiastical law, the 'precepts of the Church' which 'form a convenient summary of this part of divine law' (1920, p.184). Prayer is considered in the context of 'habits promoting spiritual progress' (1920, p. 154) as a habit to be commended to Christians. 'Christian prayer covers the whole range of intercourse with God' (1920, p.154); Kirk considers here meditation, the 'prayer of aspiration' and 'the prayer of contemplation'. The necessity of prayer is set out in terms of how far the individual Christian may grow in holiness. Thus, for example, the necessity for meditation is set out in these terms: 'No real advance in holiness or spiritual strength is possible to the Christian unless he is continually practising meditation by some such method as the above' (1920, p.155). Kirk considers public worship, in particular the Eucharist, as an element in this growth in

holiness and he makes attendance at the Eucharist, and reception of the sacrament at the Eucharist central element of the whole spiritual life.

Second, I look to Kenneth Kirk's *The Vision of God* (1932) which considers the question 'What is the final end, the summum bonum, for human beings?'. Kirk locates this end in the notion of the vision of God. Kirk gives an essential place to worship in his understanding of the summum bonum of human beings, the vision of God. In *The Vision of God* Kirk reviews the history of the doctrine of the vision of God, showing legitimate and illegitimate versions of the doctrine; but he concentrates not on a metaphysical account of the doctrine but on an ethical approach to the doctrine. Kirk gives a most significant place to the practice of worship within his understanding of the doctrine of the vision of God.

'It is suggested, therefore, in the chapters which follow, that the doctrine 'the end of life is the vision of God' has throughout been interpreted in Christian thought at its best as implying in practice that the highest prerogative of the Christian, in this life as well as hereafter, is the activity of *worship*; and that nowhere except in this activity will he find the key to his ethical problems' (1932, p.ix).

Kirk gives the moral theologian a most particular place in the matter of the consideration of the offering of worship.

'As a practical corollary it follows that the principal duty of the Christian moralist is to stimulate the spirit of worship in those whom he addresses himself, rather than to set before them code of behaviour' (1932, p.x).

The doctrine of the vision of God Kirk believes to have been obscured in Christian history. It has been obscured, he says, by the emphasis which has

been placed not on worship but on the achieving of particular religious experiences. It has been obscured by an entirely unhelpful division which has been made between public worship and private prayer which has removed prayer and worship from the centre of Christian life and thought. It has been obscured by the loss of the sense that Christian faith has a supernatural character and the consequent overemphasis of the ethical within the presentations of the Christian life. Kirk traces three major movements in the history of the Church which have obscured the doctrine of the vision of God and which have in removed worship from the centre of Christian life. The first of these movements he calls 'formalism'; formalism which arose out the overemphasis on the codification of moral precepts in the understanding of faith. The second of these he calls 'institutionalism', which arose through the emphasis and overemphasis on the practice of corporate discipline in the Church. The third of these he calls 'rigorism'; rigorism arose from the over insistence on ascetical discipline in the Church. A large part of this work offers a critical history of these movements. In these movements, worship has been removed from the centre of the Christian life, but Kirk maintains that worship must be re-located to the centre of Christian life.

'It must be obvious that the doctrine that worship is the Christian's first and paramount duty, though it receives lip-service in every part of the Church, is not one which goes unquestioned at the present day' (1932, p.xi).

The primary question of ethics, says Kirk, is the question of the nature of the summum bonum. He asks whether this should be set out in terms of happiness, as reward, or in terms of virtue. For Kirk the Christian must value virtue before reward; any account of Christian ethics which emphasizes in the first place happiness or reward is not worthy of being called a Christian ethic. At the core of Christian life and virtue Kirk places the words 'unselfishness' and 'disinterestedness'. He asks how this unselfishness is to be attained. He rejects the notion that what he has called 'formalism' can enable the Christian to attain this unselfishness. The only thing which can enable the Christian to achieve this unselfishness is worship; this is the key to attaining unselfishness and this puts into its proper place what some have imagined lies in first place here, the effort to conform to moral laws and moral codes. This worship does not arise from human effort, 'it is something which *comes upon* the soul, not which is achieved by it' (1932, p.xiii).

In Kirk's survey of rigorism as he explores the effect of the monastic life on the understanding of the summum bonum he explores the role of prayer. Kirk believes that the monastic emphasis on the primacy of prayer was a major and most positive contribution to Christian prayer and Christian life in general. When Kirk talks about prayer he means by the term 'the full round of prayer, consummated in thanksgiving, praise, and worship' (1932, p.204). Such prayer is directed to God alone; such prayer leads to self- forgetfulness and such self- forgetfulness lies at the heart of what it is to be Christian.

Kirk considers two calls on the life of the Christian, the call to worship and the call to the service of others. It might be urged that the quest for the vision of God is a selfish quest. Kirk grants that the search for spiritual experience, which is sometimes taken for the search for the vision of God may indeed be selfish. But for Kirk true worship has nothing to do with the search for the self and for personal religious experience, for it is rather the focussing on God and on the service of God. Again it might be urged that the call to worship is a higher ideal than the call to service; it is equally often urged that the very reverse is true. Kirk looks at the nature of service and finds two approaches to the notion of service. The first of these he calls 'the service of humility' and the second 'the service of patronage'. He finds no proper place for the service of patronage in the life of the Christian; only the service of humility has a place. This being so worship can take on a primacy of importance in Christian life, for true worship brings about the unselfishness which issues in a service of humility (1932, p.447). True humble worship, which finds God at its centre is Kirk's concern; a concern for the paraphernalia of worship (he talks about 'dilettantes of worship who rise from their knees with a self-complacency rivalling the worst conceits of men of action') is precisely what Kirk imagines not to lie at the heart of true worship, the true centre of Christian life.

Third, in *The Threshold of Ethics* (1933) Kirk considers 'some of the crucial introductory problems which have to be faced by anyone who proposes to read, think or teach about ethics in general or Christian ethics in particular'. The introductory problems Kirk examines are in part matters of moral psychology and in part some fundamental philosophical theories of ethics. The last part of this work considers 'Religion'.

Kirk has set out an account of what he believes are two fundamental classes of moral judgement, judgements of actions (thus 'right' or 'wrong') and judgements of motives (thus 'conscientious' or 'unconscientious'); he considers at length the concept of 'conscientiousness' (the doing of an action because one believes it to be right) (1933, p.124). In his study of religion, Kirk adds to this classification of moral judgements as 'conscientious' or 'unconscientious' judgements concerning virtue and those concerning saintliness. There is, he believes, a huge gap between, on the one hand, the conscientious life, and on the other, the life of virtue and the life of saintliness; one cannot move from one to the other by one's own power. In living the conscientious life we do what we believe to be right because, though we may be tempted choose the opposite way of doing things, we make an act of will and choose and determine to do what we believe to be right. In living a virtuous or a saintly life we need to make no such firm act of will because it has become natural to us to desire and to do those things which are either

virtuous or saintly 'The difficulty with the conscientious man is that, in order to show himself praiseworthy, he must have strong vicious desires....But the virtuous or saintly person, if he is fully virtuous or saintly, has no desires other than the desire to do what is right, and no joys other than the joy of doing what is right'( 150). For these reasons we cannot of ourselves move from the conscientious to the virtuous or the saintly. Thus Kirk believes that 'Ethics alone is "not enough"; we cannot by taking thought for ourselves or exerting effort add even a cubit to our moral stature' (1933, p.158).

To help to bridge this gap between conscientiousness and virtue or sanctity, Kirk now moves from morality to religion. He is not prepared to make this move simply by invoking the power of grace to enable us to bridge this gap, and thus he does not believe that praying for grace is either the solution of all the problems of the moral life or the centre of religion itself. Rather Kirk holds that the primacy of place in religion is to be given to the practice of worship and that this practice itself bridges this perceived gap in the moral life. Religion does not make this bridge, however, by making worship a rule of life. If religion were to make worship such a rule it would simply be proposing yet another rule by which we might measure ourselves and against which we could only act, one imagines, with acts of conscientiousness and not with acts of virtue or saintliness. Religion does not commend for us as a rule to followed the practice of acts of worship but rather offers us the spirit of worship.

'In so far as they can be said to have commended anything to man, it has not been the "practice" of worship - still less the practice of the practices of worship - but, worship or the spirit of worship itself - the love of God of which these practices must be a spontaneous expression if they are to be of any value at all' (1933, p. 163).

The motive for worship in religion Kirk believes is all important; worship cannot be made a matter of duty for human beings. 'Behind all acts of worship lies (or should lie) the motive or impulse of worship - what we may call the worshipping spirit. Religion claims that behind all acts of saintliness, and still more behind the saintly life as such, the same spirit lies. But the acquisition of this spirit cannot be laid upon men as a duty...' (1933, p.163).

Kirk advances two reasons why the acquisition of such a spirit cannot be proposed as a matter of duty for us: 'The first is that motives - though they may by repeated and concentrated action to some degree be stimulated, moulded, or repressed - are in the last resort uncontrollable. And the second is that the conscientious pursuit of worship, like every other conscientious pursuit, must fail to bridge the gulf which lies between praiseworthiness and spontaneity' (1933, pp163-164)

Conscientiousness has its place in the moral life: 'and though conscientiousness seems precluded from attaining such salvation by its own efforts, religion assures us that it will not in the end be withheld from those who follow the stern rule of duty wherever it leads'(1933, p.171). However, worship which may effect the closing of this gap between the conscientious



and the virtuous or the saintly cannot thus be proposed as a matter of duty but rather is encountered as a worshipping spirit in which the believer is entirely in his interest 'wrapped up' in worship; in such a spirit the whole of our desires are then 'centred upon forwarding the well-being of the object of ..worship' (1933, p.164). Where such a spirit of worship operates in us, Kirk believes there will in due course be this transition from the conscientious to the virtuous. Such a spirit of worship may be found, and may be nurtured in all human beings.

' For there is no man who is without the spirit of worship, at all events in some rudimentary form; and since all objects of worship are one in God, the worshipper can be led on from his imperfect conceptions of God to conceptions progressively more adequate' (1933, p.167).

R.C. Mortimer's writings were influential in the Anglican Church in England during the late 1940s and the 1950s. Mortimer, in *The Elements of Moral Theology* (1947) offers his understanding of the end of human life which he says has objective and subjective ends: 'Man's objective end is to manifest the glory of God eternally by free intelligent worship. Man's true final subjective end, that which he ought to intend, is his eternal happiness and perfect good' (1947, p.3). All things in human life are to be directed to God: 'The whole life of man, his body, mind and spirit, must be dedicated to God, in every action and at every moment. Every action and every moment which is not so dedicated is sinful, for it constitutes a disobedience to God' (1947, p.5). Prayer and worship now take their place in the direction of all life to God. Mortimer spells out what it means for human beings to have to direct every action and every moment to God: '(this) does not mean that man's every action and waking moment must be expressly and consciously directed towards God and referred to His will. It is enough that such conscious reference be made from time to time – that is, we practise prayer and worship – and that other actions be virtually referred to God' (1947, p.6).

Law helps to direct human beings to God. Within the natural law there are what Mortimer calls 'axioms' which are so clear and evident that they do not need to be proved. Among these axioms is the axiom 'God is to be worshipped'. On the basis of this axiom, 'which all men acknowledge to be good', there are to be established secondary rules which are conclusions

which drawn from or applications of these axioms; such secondary rules are to be found in the Decalogue. The precepts set out in the Decalogue are 'conclusions from an application of the general principle that it is right to worship God and to do others as we would be done by' (1947, p.10). Divine positive law lays out duties laid on human beings; in the first place among these duties are duties to God. The performance of human beings duties to God involve the cultivation of the theological virtues, the duties to believe in God, to fear God and to love God. On all human actions there is laid one standard: 'All, therefore, which develops and fosters in man the love of God is right, all which turns away from God is wrong'. On the foundations of this standard human beings are required to offer prayer and worship: 'Thus prayer and worship are a duty' (1947, p.61).

Mortimer makes the offering of prayer the sufficient means whereby the necessity to offer specific outward professions of faith can be fulfilled.. Since he has it that the acts of prayer and devotion are themselves acts of faith he makes the offering of prayer sufficient: 'And therefore there is laid upon us all the duty of frequent and fervent prayer, meditation on Scripture and the hearing of sermons' (1947, p.118). Mortimer points to the role of prayer in sustaining the workings of the virtues of fortitude and prudence. He pays only very brief attention to the virtue of religion; he speaks of the doing of ones religious duties; but he does not give any consideration there to the making of prayer and worship to God.

Mortimer, in *Christian Ethics* (1950), offers us an account of the moral life which is founded on a natural law morality and which is completed by a Christian and a biblical morality. For Mortimer, the role the Bible has in Christian ethics is to recall and to restate fundamental moral judgements which bind all human beings, but which may have been forgotten or explained away under the influence of sin. Among the matters which may have been forgotten or explained away Mortimer places in first position the teaching that it is the duty of human beings to worship God (1950, p.15). Mortimer sets out an account of the duties of all human beings. He places at the head of this account of duty the duties to God which are laid on all human beings. Our first duty is to love God above all things. This duty means that human beings must search for and find God above all else; then, having reflected on the wonder of God in all things, we are to express our gratitude to God. Fulfilling this duty to God is first a matter of private prayer and then a matter of public worship. Mortimer makes prayer the first religious duty laid on all human beings: 'Prayer is due to God – it is a duty implicit in man's creaturehood' (1950, p.47). Private prayer may or may not be immediately desired by human beings, but it remains a duty no matter what we feel about it. Prayer has beneficial effects on those who pray, but its performance remains a duty whatever we feel about its benefits for us: 'It serves our good; yet it is to be done as a duty for duty' sake' (1950, p.48). Public worship is also a matter of duty and particularly for members of the Church: 'The prime task and duty of

the Church is to worship God"(1950, p.50). The Church is said to be fulfilling this duty as it perpetuates the worship offered by Christ himself as it continues to offer the worship Christ commanded it to offer. In particular, the Church has a duty to celebrate the Eucharist and the members of the Church have a duty to play their part in this Eucharistic worship. Going to Church is a duty which Christians owe to God (1950, p.57). So Mortimer asks the question 'What does God demand of us that we should obey?' And he answers: 'The first and fundamental demand of God is that we worship Him' (1950, p.55).

Helen Oppenheimer in *The Character of Christian morality* (1965) offers a defence of Christian morality. In attempting to point to what might be distinctive and recommendable in Christian morality she examines the idea that Christian morality simply adds to secular morality one extra set of duties. Thus she asks how might Christian morality be seen and understood by others.

'The most conspicuous and clear way in which it shows is that the Christian has a whole range of extra duties, prayer and churchgoing and financial support of his Church, which the sceptic does not merely omit but feels absolutely no obligation to perform and perhaps a clear obligation not to perform' (1965, p.16).

Oppenheimer admits that Christians do indeed have such duties and that non-Christians in their present situation do not have them. The Christian is aware of a set of duties to God, which those who are not Christian do not share. Oppenheimer does not, however, wish to propose that Christian morality is distinguished only by such additional duties to God although she does not wish to deny that there are such duties owed to God.

Oppenheimer believes that there are legitimate claims made on us by God. She speaks of the reverence we owe to God our Creator. Comparing the admiration we might owe to a craftsman for what he has made she believes, in similar but much greater way, that we owe admiration and reverence to God for the work of his creation. As we recognize a great work of art our whole personality is engaged in such a way that 'it seems for the time to commit us totally' and this response Oppenheimer believes is 'akin to worship'. Similarly, the creative work of God calls from us a sense of reverence for

what so engages us in this work and call for our commitment: 'Surely if there is a God who made the heaven and the earth His glory demands a worship of that kind' (1965, p.47). The demand made on a Christian to worship God on the basis of this response to the creating God is a demand for much more than religious worship.

'To insist that Christian morality begins with worship need not be just to insist that the Christian is to be cumbered with extra religious duties. It is rather to insist that he is entirely committed to God's service' (1965, p.56).

Having accepted the notion that Christians do have such a duty to worship God, Oppenheimer suggests that the idea that we do have such a duty to worship God is not the most helpful way of approaching worship. This emphasis in her understanding of worship emerges as she investigates the sense in which religious duties might clash with the other duties of the life of the Christian to such an extent that one might have to ask which of these duties is the most important duty. To avoid this whole issue of clashing duties and the need to establish some sense of a primary duty she moves away from the language of duty to God and the talk of a duty to worship God altogether. She suggests that it might be helpful to avoid thinking of prayer or worship as demand made on us by God which needs to be met but instead 'to think of the worship of God by prayer and praise not as a toll which He may exact or remit, but as the most direct expression of what He really requires, our full personal allegiance' (1965, p.57).

Oppenheimer believes that prayer and worship are better approached as the natural expression of our relationship with God and of personal loyalty to him; religious observance is the 'natural activity of the people of God' and as such 'it is not a burden but a privilege'(1965, p.60). She recognizes that such a view of worship is not common in Christian life and may seem unrealistic: 'prayer and churchgoing are commonly regarded as compulsory or as meritorious or as smug or even as heroic, but certainly not natural' (1965, p.58). The reason why it is not commonly believed that prayer and worship are such a natural duty and such a privilege is that we have lost sight of the idea that the worship and prayer have lost the character of also being a joyful response to God and have become for many purely a matter of fulfilling a duty. Oppenheimer recognizes that when worship becomes a matter of doing a duty it becomes increasingly likely that as external coercion to offer such worship lessens so will the practice of worship lessen. The insistence on the existence of simple duty to worship God with no awareness of the responsive character of worship, with no sense of the privilege of worship, leaves the impression that it would be better if God were to let us off our duty to worship so that 'we might take possession of "our" Sunday mornings to amuse ourselves to go and dig our gardens in peace'(1965, p.59).

Oppenheimer recognizes that for sinful human beings it is difficult to see that the worship of God can indeed be such a joyful matter and not to see worship



as a burdensome duty; but she believes that if Christians are in some way new beings, in some way no longer bound by sin, then the privilege and the joy of worship should appear (1965, p.60). Oppenheimer's recognition of this duty to worship God, therefore, seems to suggest that for the Christian, for the completely new human being of Christian faith, worship will be no longer a duty at all (for such is merely a part of the burden of sin) but only a joyful response and a matter not of duty but of privilege.

Oliver O'Donovan in *Resurrection and the Moral Order* (1986), lays out a statement of the foundations for, the bases of, an evangelical ethics. He does not offer any direct or detailed consideration of worship or prayer, nor of any requirement laid on us to offer them. Nonetheless, within the context of O'Donovan's whole treatment of Christian ethics we do find principles which have implications for our study and we do find scattered throughout the text indications of O'Donovan's own approach to worship and to prayer.

O'Donovan attempts to establish a Christian ethic that arises out of Christian belief in the resurrection of Jesus; he considers the resurrection to be the confirmation of the whole work of Jesus and indeed of the whole work of God in creation and in redemption. He seeks to establish the foundations of a Christian ethic in the whole of this creative and redemptive work of God and most especially in the work of Jesus Christ. . Christian ethics is not just an ethic for the Christian, it is an ethic meant for all human beings because the

purpose of all creation and of human life within it is objective and given for all.

'Since creation, and human nature with it, are reaffirmed in the resurrection, we must firmly reject the idea that Christian ethics is esoteric, opted into by those who choose, irrelevant to those who do not choose' (1986, p.16).

O'Donovan believes that Christian ethics needs to be established on the basis of the reality of the givenness of what God has done. The objective given reality to which Christians must respond, a given created world order which has been restored in Christ, appears as the real in the human subject, and thus in this sense becomes subjective reality, through the power of the Spirit in human life.

When O'Donovan approaches the question of the highest good for the human person he speaks of the whole created order and of human beings within that created order as being 'ordered primarily, with a "supernatural ordering to praise God" ' (1986, p.38). The ordering of human life and of all creation to the praise of God is given by God himself to the creation; it is part of the objective reality which is the foundation of the moral life itself. In the knowing of the given order of creation there is a call to obedience on those who have this knowledge. 'Knowledge of the natural order is moral knowledge, and as such it is co-ordinated with obedience. There can be no true knowledge of that order without loving acceptance of it and conformity to

it, for it is known by participation and not by transcendence' (1986, p.87).

Such knowledge and such obedience must, says O'Donovan, issue in worship.

'But that means that the exercise of knowledge is tied up with the faithful performance of man's task in the world, and that his knowing will stand or fall with his worship of God and his obedience to the moral law' (1986, p.81).

The knowledge human beings have of this objective real created order 'must be a human knowledge that is co-ordinated with the performance of the human task in worship of God and obedience to moral law' (1986, p.85).

For O'Donovan, love is the principle which orders the moral life: 'It is the fulfilment of the moral law on the one hand, and the form of the virtues on the other' (1986, p.226). The command to love has two elements, the command to love God and love neighbour. O'Donovan reviews the ways in which the claims of God to be loved and the claim of neighbour to be loved might be related one to another. Among these ways of relating these two claims O'Donovan considers the approach which presents this problem as 'a conflict between the claims of worship and the claims of service' (1986, p.226). For O'Donovan the problem of balancing the claims of God and neighbour, and so the apparent problem of balancing worship and service, is no real problem at all: 'this collision does not and cannot occur in a universe where there is one God who is the Creator of all things' (1986, p.227). For O'Donovan worship and service have the same degree of importance, they are both demanded of us and they are both matters of obligation (1986, p.227). As O'Donovan tries to

balance the demands made on us of worship and of service he considers the ways in which the virtue of justice has been used to help to arbitrate the claims of God and neighbour. He says that there is a sense in which it is appropriate to base the estimation of these demands on the virtue of justice: 'And there is, of course, a level at which such arbitration of claims has to be done even with respect to our duties to God' (1986, p.233). He expands the terms of this arbitration to draw together the claims of 'sacred and secular realms of practice', of the need for 'time for prayer and time for participation in the world and time for sleep' to see how we may arbitrate and order the claims of our duties to God and to our neighbour.

In Timothy Sedgwick's *The Christian Moral Life: Practices of Piety* (1999) we are offered what Sedgwick believes to be elements of a broadly Christian and particularly Anglican moral theology. Sedgwick speaks of the living out of the Christian life as the engagement in the practices of piety; he places these practices at the heart of the Christian life, at the heart of what it is for us to offer an understanding of the story of Christian faith lived in the world (1999, p.3). The account of the practices of piety is set out in terms of two things: there is the notion of living 'incarnate love' and there is the notion of living with the practices of faith (among which are to be found the offering to God of prayer and worship). He locates the ground of Christian life and morality in the experience of God and in the practice of worship (1999, p.xi). Christian faith becomes 'a way of life which is grounded in the worship of God' (1999, p.24). The Church itself is established as 'communities of faith following a way of life that is celebrated in worship' (1999, p.84)

Sedgwick offers his own reading of the Ten Commandments, which are for him an initial point of reference for an account of the Christian moral life. He reads the first four commandments as having a reference to the Christian understanding of one's relationship to God and the last six as having reference to the Christian understanding to one's relationship to others. These two blocks within the Decalogue do not stand apart for they are connected one to

the other by the offering of worship, which is the hinge which so joins them (1999, p.13).

Sedgwick considers what he speaks of as 'disciplines of body and soul' (1999, p.105). The first two sets of these disciplines are contemplation and meditation; these are disciplines of the mind. The offering to God of prayer and worship, in which 'the Christian attends to the majesty and glory of God' (1999, p.105) are occasions for meditation and contemplation. What is said to happen in prayer? The particular nature of Christian prayer is its personal character; prayer is addressed by a person to a personal God. In prayer Christians 'meditate and contemplate, question and questioned, ask and receive, love and are loved, bless and are blessed' (1999, p.106).

Sedgwick brings together all of the disciplines of Christian life in worship. He makes worship first of all a matter of prayer but he also makes it out to be a much wider notion. Thus worship contains meditation, contemplation, self examination, self denial and the performance of the sacramental acts. All of these elements are contained in one act of worship, the celebration of the Eucharist which is offered in response to the command of Jesus to do this. Worship is then spoken of as the process within which one hears the Word of God and prayer as the process in which one enacts the Word of God in the offering of oneself to God (1999, p.136).

The requirement to offer prayer and worship to God in twentieth and twenty first century Catholic and Anglican thought

The offering of prayer and worship is given a central place in the life of the Christian in so many of the texts I have opened up here. More particularly they are given a central role in the moral and in the spiritual life of the Christian. There is a considerable emphasis, in these texts, on the sense in which prayer and worship arise within human freedom and enable the growth of human freedom. Within these texts we find a constant proposal of the notion that human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God.

This requirement is set out first in terms of law, divine positive law, natural law and the law of the Church. This whole complex pattern of law is applied to the offering of prayer and worship to God in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which lays on all human beings, in terms of the natural law, and on all members of the Church, in terms of law, natural law and divine positive the requirement to offer acts of prayer and worship to God. *Veritatis Splendor* lays down this requirement in terms of the demands of the positive precepts of the natural law on all human beings. Outside these texts it is much harder to find the requirement that all human beings are to offer prayer and worship set out in terms of law. What is much more widely evident, however, is the

notion that all members of the Church are required by law to offer this prayer and worship.

This requirement laid on members of the Church is set out in terms of the exercise of the life of virtue in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, in *Mediator Dei*, in *Dies Domini*, in the spiritual theologies of Tanquary and Harton, and, among the moralists, in the work of Haring and Kirk. More particularly it is set out, for members of the Church, in terms of the virtue of religion in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, in *Mediator Dei*, in the work of Haring' *The Law of Christ* and the work Kennedy.

The requirement is set out very simply and barely in terms of the notion of duty and in terms of the notion of obligation very extensively throughout these texts we have surveyed. Thus, and most clearly, this requirement is set out directly in terms of duty, and in terms most notably and particularly here of a duty binding all human beings, by *Mediator Dei*; and this duty to worship God is firmly connected to the notion that the very purpose of human life is to offer to God the worship that is due to God. When a statement of this requirement is set out in terms of doing ones duty this duty is laid on some members of the Church, who have special duties to offer prayer and on all members of the Church. It is rarely that this duty is laid on a wider group of people, indeed on all human beings; this is done most particularly and firmly in *Mediator Dei*.



What precisely is commonly set out in these texts about what is demanded of members of the Church in terms of the offering of worship? Attendance at public worship and full attention to what is going on in worship is commonly demanded of members of the Church. A quite minimal requirement is laid on members of the Church when it comes to the matter of receiving Communion at the celebration of the Eucharist. In public worship those present are required to offer, in some measure, adoration and praise to God. This participation in public worship can take the worshipper into quite particular elements of worship, most especially, into the engagement of the offering of sacrifice to God.

Private prayer is required of members of the Church, both continual prayer and specific acts of prayer, and this as a matter of daily practice. Prayer is to involve an inner spirit of prayer and the use of words of prayer commonly in use among members of the Church. In places members of the Church are at least invited to engage in meditation and contemplation. These texts have not abandoned at all the notion, cautioned against by Kant, that prayer is conversation with God.

The whole of this chapter brings together a set of texts from which we can derive the notion that human beings, perhaps all of us and, much more certainly, just some of us are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to

God. This is the firm testimony of texts for worship and prayer, of statements of canon law, of Church catechisms, of liturgical, spiritual and moral theology within the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church in the twentieth and twenty first centuries.

Two texts that I have looked at in this chapter, the ecumenical text *The Common Catechism* and Helen Oppenheimer's *The Character of Christian Morality*, fully aware of the notion that the making of acts of prayer and worship is required of the Christian, choose to stand out, in some measure, against this notion. Oppenheimer does not deny that there is indeed a duty laid on human beings to offer prayer and worship to God; she simply suggests that approaching prayer and worship through the notion of duty is unhelpful. *The Common Catechism* goes one step further; it suggests that prayer and worship should not be thought of as a matter of duty at all, but purely and rather as gifts given to the Christian.

Required or not, along side the whole language of requirement stands the language of delight, love and joy in the offering of public worship and the making of private prayer; time and again the notion that prayer and worship are matters of delight is proposed for us in the texts we have considered in this whole chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE TERMS OF REQUIREMENT

I have examined a series of texts, theological and philosophical that I have shown give support to the idea that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God. We have seen that those who do propose that there is such a requirement laid on human beings offer their statement of this requirement in the following terms: law, virtue, justice, religion and duty. I shall come, in my final chapter, to examine the issue of whether or not we can say human beings do have this requirement laid on them. But before I do so, it would be helpful to explore a little the terms within which Christian theologians have offered their proposal that there is such a requirement laid on human beings.

My question here is this: If we wish to continue to affirm the notion that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God, with what degree of confidence are we now likely to be able to offer such a proposition in the terms which have previously been made use of in the statement of this proposition? Therefore I propose to look at some significant recent approaches to law, virtue, justice, religion and duty among philosophers, to see how well the theologian might today trade on the usage of these terms among philosophers, in such a manner that these terms might serve to be the forms and vehicles within which Christian theology might

offer a statement of the notion that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

### Law

I have shown how it is that the demands of the law have been laid upon the practice of offering prayer and worship to God. In the discourse of the Christian Church within itself, and its discourse with those beyond the Church, one form of law, natural law, might seem to be of particular significance. Neither present day Christian theologians nor present day moral philosophers who make use of the notion of natural law are at all agreed about the meaning of the very notion of natural law (T. A. Salzman, 2003). One way of viewing the notion of natural law depends on looking to the nature of the human person, to see there a nature which is a given, distinct human nature, most commonly a nature which is shared by all human being, a nature which transcends all times and all human societies and conditions. It is then to declare that moral principles, sometimes very general moral principles, sometimes very particular moral principles, can be read off that given nature and laid on the human person. One other way of viewing the notion of natural law depends on looking to the human person, to see there what is most distinctive in human nature, and on finding this in human reason. It is then to declare that the moral law can be seen to arise out of that most distinctive element of human nature; what the reason sees, knows and accepts to be the good. It is then to declare that human beings are called to live according to the right use of that reason in every circumstance of life.

However natural law is viewed by present day moral philosophers, I have almost nowhere found places in which these philosophers connect in any way natural law and the offering of prayer and worship.

John Finnis (1980), approaches the notion of religion within a natural law ethic; this might seem, at first sight, to have something to offer to our present enquiry.

Finnis proposes a natural law ethic which draws together the notions of human goods, law, and what he sees to be the requirements of practical reasonableness. He offers an account of the natural law in what he himself calls a set of 'rather bald assertions', assertions which he believes to be undemonstrable (1980, p. 23). Three things are drawn together in this account. First, natural law is seen in terms of a set of basic practical principles which are used by everyone and which indicate for us all the basic forms of what Finnis calls 'human flourishing'. Second, natural law is seen in terms of a set of methodological requirements of practical reasonableness itself which help us to distinguish between unsound and sound practical thinking. Third, natural law is seen in terms of a set of general moral standards. The principles of natural law can then be set out, in part, in terms of practical principles which indicate basic forms of human flourishing as goods to be pursued and realized.

Finnis proposes that there are seven basic forms of human flourishing, seven forms of human goods which are to be pursued and realized. The seven human goods he proposes, which he believes to be irreducibly basic (1980, p.59) are life, knowledge, play, aesthetic experience, sociability, practical reasonableness and religion. The principles of natural law are to be spelled out, in part, in terms of these goods. Might what Finnis has to say about natural law and the human good of religion be applied to our central question?

What does Finnis mean when he uses the term 'religion'? Religion is the questioning of the other six human goods and the orders of human life and society which are brought into play in the acquisition and exercise of these goods. These goods and orders arise from human initiative, but they are limited by the terms of such human initiative and by the approach of death which destroys all human initiative; the question thus arises as to whether or not these goods and orders might be related also to the whole lasting order of the universe which surrounds us. Likewise, the exercise of human freedom in the acquisition and the exercise of these goods depends on human freedom; the question thus arises as to whether or not such freedom is to be grounded in something larger and greater than human life and freedom and which itself makes possible this freedom itself. Religion is this questioning of limitation. There is a difficulty, says Finnis, of proposing such a value, such a good. The difficulty comes out of the fact that this value arises from the proposed

establishment of a relationship between ourselves and the divine in a context where many deny that there is any need to suppose that the order we find in the universe in any way demands the affirmation of belief in any being who might be thought to be beyond any limitation.

But Finnis maintains that there is a profound need in human beings to seek to connect the self to some order, some harmony, which transcends all else and which offers a lasting and complete order to ourselves. Again Finnis proposes that there is, in human beings, a sense of responsibility which exceeds the responsibilities set out for us among the other six basic goods. These two considerations taken together, says Finnis, serve to indicate the profound concern of all human beings for those things which are beyond the existence and life of every human being. In this way he argues that religion is to have a place among the goods of human life. Thus far Finnis does relate one to the other the natural law and the life of religion, but only so far as this. Finnis does not, however, take us any further towards any particular elements of what he calls 'religion', no closer at all to the exercise of prayer and worship.

In nowhere else, other than in Finnis, in present day explorations of natural law, that is other than within those domains I have already identified in chapter four of this study, have I found any places in which natural law theory, understood in either of the ways I have described, in which the notion of natural law has been applied to the making of prayer and worship to God.

## Virtue

I have shown how it is that, in the discourse of the Christian Church, the call to a life of virtue has been laid upon the practice of offering prayer and worship to God. Amidst the huge explosion of virtue ethics among philosophers in the last twenty years can we find any evidence that the proposed requirement to offer acts of prayer and worship to God can be lodged within and expressed through present day virtue ethics?

It is fascinating to look first to a text on the virtues which has become, an international best seller, Andre Comte-Sponville's *A Short Treatise on the Great Virtues: The Uses of Philosophy in Everyday Life* (1996). Comte-Sponville offers us a wonderfully wide and generous account of human virtue; eighteen virtues in all are considered by him and in this text. But he declares that he has lost any faith in any kind of God (1996, p. 287). Not surprisingly, then, he finds no place within his system of virtues for a mention of the virtue of religion or for any virtue which might take us close to the matter of offering acts of prayer and worship to God.

Michael Slote (1992), Roger Crisp (1996) and Daniel Statman (1997) offer particularly powerful, and representative statements of the value of virtue theory for present day philosophical ethics. In none of these places can we



find any reference to the whole business of prayer and worship. However, Alasdair MacIntyre places the virtues at the heart of his system of ethics and he does take up the matter of offering prayer and worship to God within his ethics of virtue and within his approach to the virtue of religion. MacIntyre considers, in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988), the roles of justice and rationality within Western philosophy beginning with the ethics of classical Greece and ending with a variety of twentieth century ethics. Within this historical survey MacIntyre approaches the ethics of Thomas. This allows him to open up the notions of religion, prayer and worship to God as a part of an ethics of virtue.

One major collection of theological essays which builds on the philosophical ethics of MacIntyre is Murphy, Kallenberg and Nation's *Virtues & Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics After MacIntyre* (1997). Murphy's own essay in this collection makes use of MacIntyre's notion of 'practices' to open up what she sees to be three essential elements of Christian life: worship, witness and the works of mercy; these practices are constitutive of the very identity and mission of the Church (1997, p. 37). Murphy believes that public worship is central to the life of the Church: 'Today it is difficult to think what would remain of the church life if the Sunday worship services were cancelled' (1997, p.33). Murphy points to the existence of goods which are internal to true worship which are realized within that worship. Thus within worship some of the following things are realized to some extent at

least: fulfilment, freedom, obedience, renewal, the pouring out of the Spirit of God and the renewal of the people of God. Human beings can in worship acquire, possess and exercise characteristics which enable them to achieve the goods which are internal to the exercise of the practice of worship itself. Thus from the exercise of this practice appear many of the virtues which are to be considered as being central to the Christian life; among these virtues are to be found humility, penitence and forgiveness. As well as these virtues there are to be found virtues for which we have no name: the virtue of recognizing the presence of God in the breaking of the bread in the Eucharist, the virtue of sensing the movement of the Spirit in the community itself, the virtue of trembling in awe at the presence and the majesty of God (1997, p.35).

In the rediscovery of the virtues within moral philosophy a place has been found, most especially by MacIntyre and by philosophers inspired by MacIntyre, for prayer and worship within the exercise of virtue. Thus it is clearly possible to find a location for prayer and worship, and even perhaps for the notion that prayer and worship are required of us, within the terms of the notion of virtue.

### Justice

We have seen how it is that at least within some recent moral theology the connection between the necessity of offering prayer and worship and the virtues of justice and religion, set out by Thomas, has been maintained. The

notion of justice has been attended to in recent moral philosophy, most particularly in the work of John Rawls. Rawls, in *A Theory of Justice* (1999), makes justice ‘the first virtue of social institutions’ (1993, p.3). In setting out his own conception of justice he so attaches this virtue to the social order that he explores nothing other than the notion of social justice. He does this because, for him, ‘the primary subject of justice is the basic structure of society or, more exactly, the way in which the major social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages from social cooperation’ (1993, p.6).

Rawls makes a distinction between the concept of justice and various conceptions of justice.

‘I have distinguished the concept of justice as meaning a proper balance between competing claims from a conception of justice as a set of related principles for identifying the relevant considerations which determine the balance’ (1993, p.9).

Rawls sets out, throughout this work, a new way of approaching a theory of justice by the offering of a new approach to social contract theory. Within this way Rawls proposes an understanding of justice which revolves around the notion of justice as fairness.

At no point does Rawls open up the notion that justice might be anything other than a matter of social justice within human society. Certainly he takes us nowhere remotely near the notion that justice might have something to do with the relationships human beings might have with God.

How could we draw Rawls understanding of justice into our own present concern? The concern of Rawls for distributive justice within human society might possibly be expanded to take in our present concern. If we could place the Godhead, in some manner, within human society and even within particular human societies, we might be able to ask whether or not human beings are indeed giving an appropriate and fair amount of time and energy and a fair and proper set of activities into our relationship with the Godhead. We might then, conceivably, be able to ask whether or not God is receiving from us what is fair for God to expect and for us to offer to God in terms of offering prayer and worship to God. We could, of course, ask then whether or not God is giving humankind what is fair to give to humankind. This tentatively offered pathway is, however, far fetched and never likely to take us anywhere. Even if we could advance down this pathway it would still not give us a rationale for why human beings might strictly be required to offer prayer and worship to God.

Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (1974) might be placed against what Rawls has to say for it is, in part, an attack upon the theory of justice of Rawls. Nozick defends the practical and moral need for the existence of the state, against those who would have no state at all. However, he proposes that this state must be only the most minimal state consonant with the task of protecting the rights of each and every individual member within that state. In a sense, Nozick's approach offers a contrary vision for society to the vision of justice in society that Rawls offers. Nothing in Nozick's anti-theory to Rawls theory of justice takes us anywhere near the notion of justice we are looking for. We could ask whether or not God is such a being whose rights to be prayer to and worshipped needs to be proposed and sustained even within the most minimal forms of human society. Once again the argument is far fetched and artificial. Even if we could make headway here, however, we would still have no rationale in this moral theory for why human beings might be required to offer prayer and worship to God.

However, I have only been able to discover one recent philosophical treatise on justice which takes us near to our present concern. It is very hard to see how they might be drawn in to help our present enquiry. Josef Pieper's *Justice* (1957) does take us from justice to religion, from justice to prayer and worship. But this is hardly surprising, for Pieper is simply offering his own version of what Thomas had to say about justice, religion, prayer and justice. With only this exception, present day philosophical discourse about justice

has ventured nowhere near the virtue of religion or the practice of prayer and worship. Rarely do philosophers relate the notion of justice to the making of worship to God. Wolterstorff (1991) does indeed do so, albeit that he only does so when he considers the way in which public worship can be a spur to the coming to pass of justice in the life of human communities.

I had it in mind that there might be something of a half way meeting house between the texts and traditions I have examined in chapter four of my study and the public discourse of the philosophers which might be found in a set of documents issuing from the Catholic Church with some intention that they should be read and explored not only within the Church but also well beyond the walls of the Church among all humankind.

Since 1891 a series of texts have been issued by the Catholic Church on matters of social ethics. One very significant set of documents is a string of encyclical letters issued by the popes, from Leo XIII to John Paul II on matters of social ethics. Thus we turned to *Rerum Novarum* (1891), *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), *Mater et Magistra* (1961), *Pacem in Terris* (1963), *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and *Sollicitudo Re Socialis* (1987). Then again we turned to a document issuing from the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* (in W.M. Abbott, 1965) which devotes a good deal of attention to the condition of human beings in the world today and, within this, to matters of social ethics. Three things can be derived from these texts

in terms of our present study. First, the notion of justice appears in, but is by no means the core moral notion within all of these texts which offer systematic treatments of social ethics. Second, that where the notion of justice does appear it is nowhere among these texts given any clear definition; a clear focus on what precisely justice is, sadly, not evident from among these texts. Third, that although here and there among these texts (most notably in *Rerum Novarum* and in *Mater et Magistra*) some attention is given to the notion that human beings are called to offer prayer and worship to God, even here this notion is nowhere connected to the notion of justice, or the virtue of justice and is nowhere attached to any notion of a virtue of religion, never mind to a notion of a virtue of religion which might be seen as a part of the virtue of justice. Even when the bishops of the Catholic Church were gathered for an international Synod of Bishops on matters of justice, the briefing document issued by Rome, *Justice in the World*, no mention of religion as a virtue, and no mention of prayer and worship as acts of religion associated through the virtue of religion, makes any appearance at all.

I have been unable to find, in any significant way, a place in which moral philosophers relate the life of justice to the requirement laid on human beings to offer prayer and worship to God.

Very sadly the magisterial and synodical texts I have reviewed here, which might just have made the connections I am looking for, connections which

might have helped us in our dialogue with the philosophers, make no such connections. Given the silence of texts such as these, which might reasonably have been expected to make even a passing and helpful reference to religion, prayer or worship, it becomes less surprising that the philosophers of our times do not venture into this place either.

### Religion

I have shown how it is that the notion of religion has often been used in so many places to illuminate our understanding of the practices of offering prayer and worship to God. Can we find evidence in the philosophy of religion in the twentieth century of a concern for the making of prayer and worship and even of a concern for the notion that prayer and worship might possibly be required of us?

Twentieth century textbook accounts of the philosophy of religion pay only the slightest attention to prayer and worship. John Hick's *Philosophy of Religion* (1983) speaks about prayer only in terms of prayer to God and alleged answers to prayer by God as being some possible evidence for the existence of God. Brian Davies's *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (1993) makes no reference at all to prayer or worship. Likewise Davies's *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide to the Subject* (1998). Grace



Jantzen's wonderful and groundbreaking book *Becoming Divine: Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion* (1998) makes no reference to prayer or worship. Beverley Clack and Brian Clack's *The Philosophy of Religion: A Critical Introduction* (1998) has only the briefest reference to prayer as they explore a little of the significance of prayer, especially petitionary prayer, for an understanding of divine action. Charles Taliaferro's *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion* (1998) does consider prayer very briefly; first, in his discussion of the significance of religious practices, including prayer, for any notion of religious non-realism and, second, within an exploration of the notion of divine power.

Among recent anthologies on the philosophy of religion a little attention is given to the place of prayer and worship within religion. Michael Peterson, William Hasker, Bruce Reichenbach and David Basinger's *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings* (1996) includes Eleonore Stump's article on petitionary prayer 'Why Petition God?', but nothing other than that. Philip Quinn and Charles Taliaferro's *A Companion to the Philosophy of Religion* (1999) presents us with a single chapter by Eleonore Stump on petitionary prayer. Stump begins her study of prayer by taking notice of the many forms of prayer human beings offer to God; but she moves, at once, to set aside from her study all forms of prayer other than petitionary prayer and she says she does so because she maintains that it is only petitionary prayer which presents particular difficulties for a philosophy of religion (577). Brian Davies's

*Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology* (2000) makes only the briefest reference to the offering of prayer to God. In his brief account of the history of the philosophy of religion, he refers to what he sees to be Kant's lack of enthusiasm for prayer (2000, p. 8)

Paul Tillich, (1973) offers us an account of the notion of religion within which he gives an important role to what he calls the 'cultus'. Prayer becomes in Tillich's hands part of our relationship with what he calls the 'Unconditional'. Exploring the essence of religion, Tillich offers us a general definition of the essence of religion as the 'directedness towards the Unconditional' (1973, p.59) and more fully as 'the sum total of all spiritual acts directed toward grasping the unconditional import of meaning through the fulfilment of the unity of meaning' (1973, p.60). Tillich understands religion in terms of two groups of categories, theoretical categories, which are concerned with the categories of religious metaphysics, with the theoretical directedness towards the Unconditional, and practical categories, which are concerned with the categories of the ethos of religion, with the practical directedness toward the Unconditional (1973, p.102). Tillich then makes what he calls the 'cultus' the religious category of the practical sphere, as the 'sum total of those activities through which the Unconditional is to be realized in the practical sphere' (1973, p.110). The cultic lies at the heart of all religious activity: 'All religious activity is cultic' (1973, p.110).

Tillich maintains that the cultus has two fundamental acts, dedication, the union with the Holy and appropriation, the receiving from the Holy; he places the act of sacrifice, the central cultic symbol, as the place where these two fundamental acts come together. Tillich offers a history of the cultus written in terms of these two fundamental acts. To begin with, no distinction was made between the acts of the cult and everyday acts in the world; all daily acts had a cultic value. Then the cultus became more and more bound up with quite particular and distinct myths and as it did so it became distanced from the capacities of every human being becoming instead the province of a particular priestly caste. As religions advanced and as what was seen to be the Holy became personalized and transcendent then the cultus took on particular personal and social categories. Thus religion became a matter of a personal relationship with God and sacrifice became personal devotion; God was seen as Lord and Ruler and the cultus became a matter of divine service. Eventually sacrifice and religious ritual lost their sacramental character and significance and they were seen instead as a matter of the offering of devotion. Even later still, sacrifice and ritual lost any significance and they were replaced by pure acts of obedience. When this time came the priesthood was replaced by teachers of the law as the service of God became simply the renunciation of one's own will. When this arrived there was a movement away from the cultic to the ethical. That being said this transition is never properly achieved in the sphere of religion, religion still continues to be in some measure a matter of having a personal relationship to God. Because of

this, prayer retains its central and decisive significance in religion and is there the form of the cultus itself. In religion prayer becomes quite simply the asking of forgiveness and the giving of forgiveness, that is, the ultimate relationship with the Unconditional. This religion is the fulfilment of all religion, albeit that it is first the purification of all religion. This religion becomes the perfection of religion, a religion of paradox, a religion of spiritual love which is itself the synthesis of ecstasy and obedience.

The cultus may be replaced by what Tillich describes as an 'autonomous ethos' in which there is a directedness towards the Unconditional in the realm of human action. Such an ethos bears within itself a contradiction for it is the search for the unconditioned among conditioned forms. Such an ethos disintegrates into two spheres which in the cultus have been united, the personal and the social. Where this occurs the personal loses its concern for cultic union and becomes merely the subjugation to law and the social loses its concern for cultic righteousness and purity and becomes a place of formal justice dedicated to the cultivation of personality and the promotion of culture. But even here while this ethos retains what Tillich describes as a 'living power' (1973, p.115) it still retains something of a cultic character. In so far as this ethos becomes 'unbelief-ful, empty and formal'; it becomes a way which full of loss and which is without any gain, a place of 'the emptiness of mere form' (1973, p.116). Thus this autonomous ethos forces us towards a theonomous ethos. Such an ethos Tillich believes is of decisive significance

for culture and for religion. Such an ethos prevents the cultus from violating culture. Such an ethos forces one to a realisation that all cultus is really symbolic, 'that the special cultic forms are not forms in the proper sense but are rather representations of the living import inherent in all activity' (1973, p.117). But such an ethos does not reduce the cultus to a merely representational activity but rather it makes the cultus a real activity and such a real activity that all 'meaning-fulfilling activity' is itself cultus.

W.P. Paterson (1925) presents the worship of God as an essential part of the life of religion. Worship he takes to be a universal feature of all human societies (1925, p. 24). He takes religion to be a matter of some elemental human instinct and worship to be a part of that very human instinct. He proposes that there are least four human instincts which are to be related to the life of religion; each of these forms of human instinct when associated with religion gives rise to a particular form of religion. Thus religion which is directed to the good of the individual may be associated with the defence of the self against fear and danger and also with the furtherance and fulfilment of the life of the individual, with the elevation of that life (1925, p. 81). Likewise religion may be associated not with the furtherance and the prospering of the individual but with the self abasement of the individual (1925, p. 88). Religion may be associated with the instinct of what he calls 'tender emotion', with the capacity to love (1925, p. 91). Religion may be associated with the feeling of wonder, with the instinct which is curiosity.

Since the instinct to worship God is to be seen as a part of the religious instinct itself then worship must be expressed in and through at least each of these forms of religion and take on the character of that form of the religious instinct

Paterson explores the notion that religion is to be understood in terms of duty to God. Human beings have felt that God makes 'imperious claims upon his creatures, and has evoked a constant response from man's native capacity of reverence and his sense of obligation' (1925, p. 229). This sense of duty, of obligation, has become a very significant element of religion: It has been generally recognised that religious duty is a form of obligation, and duty to God has sometimes been fastened on as the most characteristic feature of the religious life' (1925, p. 229). Paterson traces the etymology of the term 'religion' relating that term to three possible origins. All three of which relate the notion of religion to the doing of duty (1925, p. 229).

Paterson examines the ways in which religions have understood and given a place to the notion of the duty which human beings owe to God. He explores the history of two forms of what he calls 'obligation- type' religion, the mixed and the pure. In the mixed form, the sense of duty to God has co-existence with faith and hope in salvation from God. In this mixed form of a religion of obligation, while obligation plays a part in religion, while human beings worship God because they wish to express the worship which they believe is

required of them, the worship which they are obliged to offer, they also offer worship because it will, in some part, enable them to attain some human good. In the pure form of the obligation type of religion 'the feeling of obligation towards God has been completely detached from the expectation of special divine protection and blessing' (1925, p.248). In the pure form of religion, religious worship is offered only because it is believed that human beings have such a duty to God.

Paterson believes that these types of religion within which obligation takes on such a special place are to be valued highly, they are entitled to be treated with the greatest of respect. He believes that the mixed form of this type of religion is a hugely valuable approach to religion, an approach to religion which cannot be bettered. He maintains that although the pure form of this type of religion has its own inadequacies it also has its own moral grandeur (1925, p. 255). For Paterson, the religion of obligation bears witness to the truth of the belief in the existence of a duty to worship God.

'At the same time it has recognised that there are duties which it owes to God, as evidenced by the general agreement to assemble for common worship' (1925, p. 256).

Whatever may have been the other motives guiding worship, from this approach to religion emerges 'the conviction that it is required by a spiritual code of duty to pay homage to the Highest, and to re-dedicate oneself to His service' (1925, p. 256). Paterson, even granted his acceptance of the

grandeur of the pure form of obligation type religion, rejects such an approach to religion. Such an approach to religion, he says, is not adequate to the needs of human beings; while it is wonderful to accept the imposition on human beings of duty to worship God it is essential that human beings are able to gain some good, some benefit for themselves.

Paterson places alongside the forms of religion which emphasise above all that religion is a matter of duty, of obligation, those forms of religion which emphasise the sense in which religion is a matter of living with and for the light, the love of God and the vision of God.. However much the desire to see religion in terms of the doing of a duty to God this needs to be supplemented by the understanding of the place of love, of the knowledge of the light and of the vision of God.

‘While however, it need not be expected that mankind will ever fall below the theory of the religion of obligation, it has to be observed that when it has been proposed as the whole of religion this has been rejected as insufficient to meet the needs of the human situation’ (1925, p. 258).

Paterson leaves the religion of obligation in place, seeing it as the place below which human beings are not to descend, even though human beings will want to exceed this level. So even given such a broadening of religious understanding beyond a religion of obligation, Paterson does not ever remove the notion that human beings are in some manner bound by duty, bound as matter of obligation, to offer worship to God.



William Cantwell Smith (1978) explores the question 'What is religion?' The essential answer that he offers us to this question is that it is unwise and unhelpful to ask this question in this form at all. He writes:

'Rather than addressing ourselves to the problem 'What is the nature of religion?' I suggest that an understanding of the variegated and evolving religious situation of mankind can proceed, and perhaps can proceed only, if that question in that form be set aside or dropped, as inapt.' (1978, p.12)

Again he remarks: 'To look for 'religion' is to ask too much, and at the same time too little' (1978, p.13). Although at the outset he proposes that the phenomena of religious life do undoubtedly exist he also maintains that the proposal that there is some distinctive entity which is religion is unwarranted (1978, p. 17).

Very briefly I shall retrace Cantwell Smith's steps to show a little of how he has arrived at such a conclusion. He proposes that any present day explorer of the question 'What is religion?' has to take note of a number of present day concerns, all of which make it immensely difficult to arrive at anything purely to be called 'religion'. Among these concerns he places the immense power of and huge demand that empirical science places on any study of religion. He points to the rise of a real awareness of the vast multiplicity of religious traditions and even of huge diversity within seemingly unified individual religious traditions, which makes it very difficult to find a common character

among them all and so makes it difficult to ask the question in this form. He maintains that the speed of change in human societies among the communities in which religious traditions exist is so huge that it makes it impossible to catch a glimpse of some permanent essence of religion. He looks to the very various states of health of the religious traditions, the prospering of some and the huge decline of others; this too he says makes it very difficult for us to find some clear, stable entity called religion.

Cantwell Smith maintains that the power and sophistication of the several ways of studying religion still fail to meet the real character of the religions being considered. Thus he finds wanting the work of philosophers, historians, psychologists and sociologists who have approached the study of religion. Nonetheless he does propose to open up that complex set of things which are the religions to seek to find some understanding of them (1978, p. 5). He believes that this is a real and urgent need, in the face of the most fundamental questions which humanity asks, both as individual human beings who search to find meaning and as members of particular human societies who are searching to find a world community which joins together all human societies. The need he feels to understand the nature of human society carries with it the need to grow in an appreciation of the diversity of human societies. Here worship appears. The fact that human beings do worship God and that they worship God in a vast variety of ways are facts which need our attention if we are to understand human societies in a such a manner that we can find a unity

in the whole world community. The very fact that human beings do worship God and that they continue to worship God is a matter of significance in any attempt to understand human life and human community (1978, p. 10).

Cantwell Smith offers a history of the term religion by spelling out four possible meanings for the term religion which have emerged from this history. First, the term religion can mean personal piety. Second, it can be used to refer to a whole system of religion. Third, it can be used to refer to the actual historical and sociological system of a particular religion. Fourth, it is used as the 'generic summation, religion in general' (1978, p. 49). He proposes that the word religion should be abandoned : 'I suggest that the term 'religion' is confusing, unnecessary, and distorting – confusing and unnecessary especially in the first and fourth senses, distorting in the second and third' (1978, p.50).

Ninian Smart (1969) explores the nature of religion as it may be seen within the principal religious traditions of humankind. He gives to all religions six core 'dimensions'; ritual, mythological, doctrinal, ethical, social and experiential. The offering to God of acts of prayer and worship appear within these elements of religions, most especially within their ritual and the experiential dimensions. Smart systematically applies these dimensions to his study of each of the religions he explores in this text.

I had imagined that among twentieth century philosophers examining the notion of religion there might be a concern for prayer and worship which might help my own question forward. To begin with, however, I have found, in Cantwell Smith, a marked sense of doubt that the very term religion, is at all usable any longer. To the majority of the philosophers of religion, who have not abandoned the notion of religion, very little attention is paid to the making of prayer and worship. Smart maintains the usage of the term religion and gives an essential place in all religion, within the domain of ritual, to the worship of God. Tillich holds fast to the notion of religion and gives to the cultus as a whole and to prayer in particular a significant place within the whole of religion. However, in Paterson I have found a philosopher who not only is content to explore religion, who is prepared to pay attention, in his philosophy, to the making of prayer and worship to God, but who even has things to bring to the questioning of the required character of prayer and worship.

### Duty

I have shown the requirement to offer prayer and worship to God set out in terms of the duty of obeying law and the duty to live a life of virtue as well simply in terms simply of doing that which it is our duty to do. How far might

the idea of duty, as we encounter it today serve to provide a language within which our requirement might be expressed?

Elizabeth Anscombe (1958) famously warned philosophers to avoid the whole domain of duty and obligation. She set forward three fundamental theses about moral philosophy, the second of which is relevant for my study.

‘The second (thesis) is that concepts of obligation, and duty – *moral* obligation and *moral* duty, that is to say – and what is *morally* right and wrong, and of the *moral* sense of ‘ought’, ought to be jettisoned if this is psychologically possible; because they are survivals, or derivatives from survivals, from an earlier conception of ethics which no longer generally survives, and are only harmful without it’ (1958, p.1).

Within the realm of political philosophy, David Selborne (1994) attempts to set out an account of the duties which might be said to hold among citizens simply as citizens. Selborne writes about this attempt: ‘It is not surprising, then, that the principle of duty plays a small role, when it plays a role at all, in a contemporary political theory’ (1994, p.7). Again he talks about the difficulty of talking about duty and duties today: ‘To address a ‘principle of duty’ to such a world is to speak a foreign moral language’ (1994, p.11).

Given what Anscombe has to say, perhaps past philosophers ought not to have asked questions about duty and obligation, but they did and, in chapter three of this study, I have read them so. Given what Anscombe has to say perhaps

present day philosophers ought not to ask questions about duty and about obligation, but here and there they do so and I read them so.

Onora O'Neill (1992) offers a survey of how the notion of duty and the notion of obligation (terms which she regards as more or less interchangeable) have been considered. She draws out sets of distinctions between ethical and non-ethical duties (among which she points to religious duties), natural and positive duties, perfect and imperfect duties (and she applies this distinction to both special and universal duties), and strict and wide duties. She also speaks of duties to self and to others, and of duties of justice. What she does not quite speak of here, and which I suggest is appropriate to add to this list is the distinction, often made, between actual duties and prima facie duties. O'Neill (1996) herself makes extensive use of the notion of obligation, of duty. Thus she affirms the validity of the whole notion of obligation and the notion of duty within a moral system. In particular, O'Neill affirms the significance of obligations which bind us and to which rights are attached as well as obligations which bind us and which have no rights attached to them. Perhaps it might be proper, with the encouragement of O'Neill, to at least open up again at this point, the notions of duty and obligation however fragile these notions might seem.

While it has been possible to propose all manner of universal declarations of human rights, and while these declarations have not seemed commonly to be

wholly unacceptable, nobody has set out in our time a comprehensive universal declaration of human duties. Of course if we accept the universal validity of rights we can attempt to match these rights with duties which someone at least needs to fulfil. What, I suspect, would not be clear to anyone setting out from scratch to produce a universal declaration of duties, is what might be likely to appear in this list or really needed to appear in this list. I have little doubt that very few present day philosophers, would even think of suggesting that duties to God might be a possible candidate for such a declaration.

What might seem more fruitful would be the search for sets of duties not for all human beings, but for particular human communities and for particular people within communities. In a given society it is commonly proposed that there are sets of duties which are laid on parents, duties the society expects to be met. In a given country duties are laid on automobile drivers which bind them when they are preparing to drive a car and while they are driving a car. Within a particular profession duties are laid on members of that profession. All of these sorts of duties can be and are enforced within human societies; when human beings fail to undertake and to fulfil these duties, then sanctions will be imposed by those societies.

Many would surely accept the fact that if the Christian Church lays down sets of duties it expects its ministers to perform it is entirely appropriate for it to do

so. Likewise many would surely accept that the Church is entirely entitled to lay down lists of duties for its members; if the members choose to belong to the Church then they take on with that choice some readiness to accept the list of duties proposed for it.

What women and men of our time beyond the reaches of the Church will have no readiness to accept, and perhaps even to consider, is the notion that the Church is able to lay down sets of duties which are to be laid on all human beings and which all human beings ought to accept. What seem much more than unlikely is the prospect of women and men of our time taking an iota of notice of the Church when the Church attempts to suggest that every human being has a duty to offer prayer and worship to God. We have seen how it was that among British philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was entirely commonplace to locate a list of duties to God within lists of human duties. As R.H. Hare (1952) says 'Books on 'The Whole Duty of Man' are no longer written'; there is no longer any confidence in books of this kind' (1952, p.72). Nobody would now expect to see philosophers in our time, even if they were prepared to produce a list of duties human beings ought to meet, giving even the tiniest consideration to the notion that human beings do actually have a duty, stated so bluntly, to offer prayer and worship to God.



On being required to offer prayer and worship to God: the language of the philosopher

I have shown how it is that the positive requirement to offer acts of prayer and worship to God has commonly been set out in terms of law, virtue, justice, religion and in terms of doing one's duty. In this chapter I have explored the matter of how well the Church can draw on present day philosophical discourse about law, virtue, justice, religion and duty in support of any claim that all human beings are truly required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God

I have been unable to find any very evident support among present day moral philosophers for the notion that the terms law, virtue, justice and duty, are to be used to refer to prayer, worship and a requirement to offer prayer and worship to God. In addition, I am also unable to find any reason why the use made of any of these terms among present day philosophers precludes the Christian moralist from making a bid to make use of these terms in this manner. If the Christian Church, and the Christian moralist, wish to trade on the use made of these terms by present day philosophers, and if they seek to extend the use made by philosophers of these terms, as a part of their bid to propose our requirement, it remains open for them to attempt to do precisely that.

The attempt to make use of the demands of natural law, to lay down a requirement on all human beings to offer acts of prayer and worship to God, faces the particular difficulty of the sharp lack of agreement between moral theologians, never mind between moral philosophers, of the precise meaning of the notion of natural law. The approach made to natural law by Finnis seems to offer a possible way in which prayer and worship might be brought within the terms of natural law by the moral philosopher. The work of MacIntyre does seem to offer something of a way forward for philosophers to be led to find an extension of the term virtue so as to draw in prayer and worship. No very obvious ways forward present themselves for the drawing into the notion of justice of the making of prayer and worship to God by moral philosophers. Even if it is now possible for the moralist to regain an acceptable use of the notion of duty, it is not at all apparent that present day moral philosophers are at all likely to place a duty to offer prayer and worship to God among any possible list of the duties truly laid on human beings.

The usage of the term religion does at least present something of an opportunity for the Christian moralist to seek to extend the common philosophical understanding of religion to include the offering of prayer and worship to God. Paterson, in particular, offers us something of a way of bringing the notion of religion to bear on the making of prayer and worship to God. Even here, however, it is evident that in the account more recent philosophers make of the term religion something of a sea change would need

to take place if prayer and worship were to take a secure place in present day philosophical approaches to this notion.

If the Church wishes to propose for women and men of our time that we must all meet the demands of a requirement laid on us all that we are all to offer acts of prayer and worship to God, then the Church will need to be able to convince the world that to live according to the demands of law, virtue, justice, and duty and according to the true and necessary life of religion, then we must all take up that form of life which included the offering of acts of prayer and worship to God.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **THE QUESTION OF REQUIREMENT**

The making of acts of prayer and worship to God is a matter of very great concern for many human beings, for religious believers in general and, within the terms of this study, for Christians in particular. I have explored a wide range of texts from the thirteenth to the twenty first centuries that, negatively as well as positively, make the matter of offering prayer and worship to God a matter of some considerable significance. I have set out to ask a question which is, in the form in which I have asked it, a novel question, worthy, I believe, of the attention of moral philosophers and moral theologians. I have drawn out from these texts the concern I find there for the notion that human beings might be required to offer prayer and worship to God. What I have nowhere been able to discover within the moral theology and the moral philosophy I have considered, past or present, is a dedicated and direct systematic and historical engagement with the question ‘Are human beings required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God?’

Given the considerable significance that prayer and worship do have in the lives of so many, and given the concern shown within so many and so varied a set of texts for the notion that there is a requirement for human beings, I urge moral theologians and moral philosophers to consider my question

entirely directly, and then to add my question to the common canon of questions asked by moral theologians and moral philosophers. What I have written in my study I offer as one small contribution to the task of asking and answering what I believe, in its direct present form, to be a novel and significant question.

So I ask: Is it possible now to remain attached to the notion that human beings are truly required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God? There is a need to consider how well and how securely the texts I have examined in this study do indeed offer a clear and secure form of proposing our present requirement. I have shown, in chapter three of this study, that there is a considerable body of opinion that seeks to move us away from the notion that human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God. What are we to make of the objections to the notion that we are required to offer prayer and worship to God? It is very difficult to draw out from Hume, Kant, Feuerbach and Durkheim, and Sharpe anything other than a very negative answer to our question. What are the fundamental terms within which the dismissal of this requirement is urged on us and how might we approach these dismissals of our requirement?

The first is antipathy, even disgust, about the whole matter of offering prayer and worship to God; the whole business of offering prayer and worship to God is so unpleasant and tedious that it demeans human beings. The second

is the notion that the attempt to offer to God acts of prayer and worship as a matter of our duty to God is misguided and inappropriate for we cannot have duties to God because we cannot intuit God. For Kant this is important because as human beings who are called to respond to the real demands of duty laid on us, by attempting to engage in the performance of what are thought to be duties to God, we fail to engage in what are our real moral duties. The third, which accompanies the dismissal of the existence of an objective Godhead, is the notion that by continuing to offer prayer and worship to God we are foolishly offering to a non-existent deity what we are truly and what we should indeed be offering to ourselves and to each other.

If it is urged that the making of prayer is unpleasant, disgusting and tedious, it is not really clear how a defence of prayer and worship might be mounted. Giving testimony to the fact that one does not find the offering of prayer and worship to be distasteful might be of some use; such a testimony might simply have to stand against the expressions that Hume and Kant give to their own experience of the unpleasant and even the distasteful when looking at people praying to and offering worship to God. Giving such a testimony is, however, simply that. Those who urge on us that we are required to pray to and to worship God need to find some way of showing that the work of offering prayer and worship to God can possibly be anything other than unpleasant, distasteful and undignified, even, perhaps that it might be a commendable and a matter of delight.

If it is urged that the offering of prayer and worship is absurd, because it is not possible for ourselves as human beings to speak to a being we cannot in any manner intuit, then those who wish to urge our requirement on us will need to demonstrate either that human beings can intuit God or that we do not need to have knowledge in terms of what Kant calls intuition in order for us to address God. In a similar vein, those who wish to urge our requirement on us will need to demonstrate either that we do not need to intuit a being for us to have duties to that being, or that we do have such intuitive knowledge of the divine being and so we can have duties to this being.

If it is urged that human beings cannot have knowledge of God and duties to God because no really objective divine being exists then our question will take second place to the altogether vaster question of the very existence of God. Human beings who have no belief in God can hardly meaningfully be said to have a duty to offer prayer and worship to the deity the reality of whose existence they dismiss. Those who wish to propose that all human beings have a requirement laid on us to offer acts of prayer and worship to God will, of course, need, to be ready to engage in the never ending question of the real existence of God. Perhaps one pathway of saving the existence of a requirement laid on all human beings to offer acts of prayer and worship to God might be opened up by exploring the intriguing notion that all human beings have a prior duty laid on them to believe in God (Brinton, 1982).

The strongest form in which our requirement is stated, as we have seen in chapter two of this study, is to be found within the work of Thomas. Thomas can be seen to be laying down this requirement using a rich, complex set of terms, most especially law, virtue and religion, which I have gathered into one integrated account, which can readily be offered to the Church and its members. I have pointed to two major problems, which are to be located within the way in which Thomas approaches both the notion of law and the notion of religion, which come upon us when we try to take Thomas out beyond the Church and when we seek to lay such a requirement on all human beings. There is, first, the problem of whether or not Thomas is really drawing purely on a natural law that can be applied to all human beings. Or is it rather, and what seems evident in the *Summa*, that Thomas approaches the demands of natural law only when this law and these demands are placed in the context of divine positive law? In this manner it is not clear that we can use what Thomas has to say about the demands laid on us in terms of natural law outside the context of Judaeo Christian positive divine law. There is, second, the uncertainty about whether when Thomas is approaching the notion of the virtue of religion, he is talking about the notion of religion as an acquired moral virtue open to all, or he is talking about an infused moral virtue, accompanying and given with the infused theological virtues only open to and approachable by those who live the Christian life within the context of these directly divinely given theological virtues.



A firm statement of the notion that human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God is also evident among the seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers I have reviewed in the first part of chapter three of this study. None of these philosophers offers the sort of complex statement of this requirement we see in Thomas. Between them all, however, there is a common recourse to law and to virtue, though there is not a common recourse to the virtues of justice and religion. Among these philosophers there is the frequent recourse to the notion of doing one's duty; sometimes this is made to stand simply and alone and sometimes this is allied with the notion of virtue. The greatest problem we have in terms of making use of these answers, especially if we wish to use them to lay this requirement on all human beings, arises out of the problem I have identified of how the knowledge of this requirement is said to come to us. The appeal, without further argument, to universal principles evident to all is less than compelling. The appeal to passions and affections of the soul as clear evidence of the requirement is an appeal to what might be thought to be some form of empirical evidence for the requirement; only if we are already inclined to offer prayer and worship to God, and to meet this requirement, are we likely to find the appeal to such personally encountered evidence in the least compelling.

I have shown, in chapter four of this study, how it is that a whole body of present day texts, materials for worship, codes of canon law, catechetical

materials, magisterial declarations, as well as a whole body of liturgical, spiritual and moral theology, very especially texts, materials and theologies which arise within the Catholic Church but also, but to a lesser extent, within the Anglican Church, point to the existence of the requirement to offer prayer and worship to God. None of the texts I have surveyed here presents the rounded, complex approach to prayer and worship I have been able to derive from the writings of Thomas. What my examination of these texts does show, however, is that the notion that human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God is very much a living idea within the Christian Church. Many of these texts can be used to demonstrate the application of our requirement to members of the Church. However, much less readily can these texts be directed to the purpose of laying our requirement on all human beings.

I have examined the ways in which positive answers to my question can be drawn out from a whole series of texts, philosophical and theological. I have shown how it is that the notion of being required to offer acts of prayer and worship can be drawn out from texts drawn from the thirteenth century until present day. I have shown that this notion has been advanced in and through a whole range of texts, liturgical, canonical, magisterial, catechetical, theological and philosophical.

From within the texts I have considered we have seen expressions, firstly, of the commonly held notion within the Church that *some* human beings within

the Christian Church are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God. This requirement is laid on those whose profession within the Church, most especially, as we have seen, on ordained ministers. There is a sense in which this is a very parochial matter, a matter of concern certainly for those who have taken on particular roles within the Church and who have laid on them by the Church certain responsibilities, requirements, duties to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

From within the texts I have considered we have seen time and again within the Church expressions of the commonly held notion, secondly, *that all members of the Christian Church* are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God. Members of the Church commonly offer prayer and worship to God and many even believe that they are required, by God and by the Church, to do so. In a sense this is also a somewhat parochial matter that only members of the Church might feel the need to explore and to accept. If human beings want to take on such actions as a part of their Christian life then the validity of this choice clearly needs to be looked at in the context of the validity of their fundamental option to take on this faith in the first place.

From within the texts I have considered we have seen within the Church, expressions of the notion, finally, *that all human beings* are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God. In so far as the Church maintains this belief, the Church is attempting to reach out to those who stand outside the

Church seeking to lay on them all a requirement which some of them will never hear about, which some of them will reject and which some of them might, in time, accept. I would wish to urge that it is important that those who stand outside the Church are given an opportunity to hear about this proposed requirement and are given the space and the freedom to take on this requirement or not just as they truly see fit.

I am led to the conclusion, through my reading of texts drawn from the thirteenth century until the present day, that the notion that all human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God has not been adequately demonstrated by any of the texts we have examined. Equally well, I am led to the conclusion, on the basis of a whole chorus of texts that I have surveyed, that the Christian Church, most especially the Catholic Church, and, to a lesser degree the Church of England does hold firmly to and does sustain, with a complex and internally coherent set of reasons, the notion, that there is indeed a requirement laid on members of the Church to offer acts of prayer and worship to God.

One of the weaknesses of present day approaches to our requirement lies, as we have seen in chapter five of this study, in the way in which the terms that have been used to carry our requirement no longer commonly carry any engagement with the making of prayer and worship. If we wish to propose the truth of our requirement, laid on anyone at all, it would be wise if we were to state it in as rich and compelling a fashion as we can. Thus we need to state it by, at least, re-visiting and using, in the first place, as much as we can of the terms law, virtue, justice, religion, duty. Each of these terms needs to be expanded to include a real and direct engagement with prayer and worship if they are to serve as a part of a robust statement of the requirement laid on members of the Church and on all humankind. We might now, of course, be seeking to find altogether new terms in which we might be able to offer whatever statement we need to offer about our requirement.

There is one notion that I have shown is found, but somewhat rarely found, in Christian theology that seems to take us around some of the terms of our question. We have seen, most especially in the terms of the Common Catechism and in terms of the work of Oppenheimer, the notion that the offering of prayer and worship to God is not best seen as a matter of requirement at all. Thus this way of thinking defends the meaningfulness and the value of the offering of prayer and worship to God; this way of thinking still offers a firm recommendation to us that we should offer prayer and

worship to God. However, this way of thinking proposes for us that prayer and worship will best prosper if we leave aside altogether the notion that prayer and worship are truly required of us and if we proclaim instead that prayer and worship are to be engaged in as matters of pure delight. It is possible to connect this approach to our question with a notion, that has appeared here and there in our study, that it is helpful, and this purely as a pedagogic device, for prayer and worship to be presented to members of the Church as matters of requirement. The role of requirement, in this account, exists purely so that members of the Church might be helped to make the practice of prayer and worship a regular part of their lives, and this until the time when prayer and worship have become such a regular part of life that the requirement can safely be laid aside. When the requirement is thus set aside prayer and worship might become what they were always meant to be, matters of delight and joy for all those who offer such acts to God. .

What implications might the asking and the answering of my central question have? If human beings are required to offer acts of prayer and worship to God then at least three major domains of Christian theology will need to be opened up. The first has to do with God, the second with human beings and the third with the Church.

The making of prayer and worship to God can tell us a great deal about the nature of the God we worship (Wainwright, 1980). If human beings are *required* to offer acts of prayer and worship to God, what does this say about God? Does God require us to offer prayer and worship to God? In the various forms of statement of this requirement, set out in terms of law, virtue, justice, religion and duty, it is clear that all of these forms of statement lay the ultimate responsibility for the proposal of this requirement with God. Thus, God is the author and origin of law, of virtue and of duties laid on human beings. Through these means God lays on us, directly or indirectly, this requirement. But why?

It is often said, most especially in moments of public prayer and worship, that God wants us to praise him, thank him, beg him for forgiveness, and ask for his help. But why require us to praise him and thank him? It is often said, as we have seen, that God delights in our praise and thanksgiving, deserves our praise and our thanksgiving, and indeed that God's ultimate purpose in making all creation, in general, and all human beings, in particular, is for all of

this created reality to offer such praise and thanksgiving. This can look a little too much like saying that God desiring such praise and thanksgiving needs such praise and thanksgiving and so requires such praise and thanksgiving. Of course this wholly distorts the notion Christians have of the Godhead, for within the Christian Church we are told time and again that God needs nothing from us at all. It might be more appropriate for the one who offers prayer and worship to maintain that God delights in our prayer and worship, does not need our prayer and worship but does offer to us the making of prayer and worship so that we ourselves can benefit from prayer and worship. Such a benefit comes to us because of the way in which prayer and worship are said to be able to open us up to God and to the needs of others and of ourselves.



If human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God what does this say about human beings? It is very often said that human beings can and do benefit hugely from engaging in the practice of prayer and worship. Thus it is said that human beings can grow in awareness of God, find joy and delight, grow morally and spiritually as individuals and as societies, because of the making of prayer and worship to God. In this sense it might be urged that the offering of prayer and worship is a major agent for the advancing of human flourishing, human fulfilment and perfection. What function does the allegedly required character of prayer and worship have on human flourishing? We might wish to insist on the required character of prayer and worship but to insist on it only as a pedagogic device given to human beings to help them to establish such a habit of prayer and worship that they are able to move securely towards the achievement of true human flourishing; perhaps, once the journey towards flourishing is established then the ladder of requiredness can be left behind. Perhaps the brute fact of human beings doing what they are required to do becomes itself a moral, spiritual, human value whose value lies wholly and totally in the constant doing of that which is required.

If human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God then what implications might this have for the fate of human beings? It is very well for Christians to maintain that those who are especially bound by profession and

all those who profess the Christian faith are able to proclaim, as they do, and to proclaim appropriately, that God will reward them for their faithful offering of prayer and worship. It may very well be the case that it is appropriate for Christians to maintain, as we have seen them do, that members of the Church will be punished by God for failing to offer prayer and worship. But is it at all sustainable for Christians to propose that all human beings who do not offer prayer and worship are bringing punishment and damnation on themselves? If human beings are to be punished for failing to offer prayer and worship to God then what sort of God do Christians imagine God to be? Might the God of Christian faith be a God who punishes us because we fail to offer to God praise and adoration?

If human beings are required to offer prayer and worship to God what does this say about the Church? We have seen throughout this study the elaboration of the notion that prayer and worship lie and need to lie at the very centre of the Church, both as one community and as a set of individuals. If this is true then the Church needs, surely, to take some care to ensure that what is held in principle needs to appear in practice. If this need is more than a need but is also a requirement, laid on individuals and on the whole community, then the Church, in all its parts, surely needs to make the existence of such a requirement even more obvious to all of its members. We have seen that the laying on the Church of such a requirement is expressed both by the Catholic and the Anglican Churches. We have also seen that the urging of such a requirement is more firmly proposed by the Catholic than the Anglican; this is, to some extent, because the Catholic Church, in its formal magisterial statements, has a much firmer and more extensive way of setting out teaching than has the Anglican Church. It would be helpful, within the context of ecumenical dialogue, (as a part of joint discussions about the sacraments, about the moral life and about the spiritual life) for the Catholic and the Anglican communions to take up, and to explore together, the notion that human beings in general, and members of the Church, in particular, are required to offer prayer and worship to God.

My question has implications for the work of the Church in the world. If the offering of prayer and worship lies at the centre of the life of the Church and if the practice of prayer and worship are required of the members of the Church, then it is surely the case that the notion and the practice of mission and evangelism are directed by the need to draw all human beings towards the practice of prayer and worship offered to God. I have restricted this study to the exploration of the Christian Church, and, indeed, to parts and not the whole of the whole Church. If the drawing of others into faith, and into prayer and worship is indeed a concern for the Church in its mission, it is evident that, as the Church looks out beyond itself, and particularly as it looks out to engagement with other faiths, it will need to ask what, if anything, of value exists within these faith traditions in terms of the life of prayer and worship, and what, if anything, can be drawn into the practice of these faith communities in terms of a requirement to offer there also the offering of prayer and worship to God. Might it be the case, even, that devotees of the other great world faiths fulfil the terms of my requirement as they offer, in the terms of their own faith community, prayer and worship to God? Every year the Vatican sends out greetings to members of the other great faith communities on their festival days and gives them encouragement as they meet together to celebrate and to worship God. Might it be the case that the worship the Jews offer to God, directed still by divinely given moral and ceremonial law, is not, in fact deadly for them, although, as Thomas urges, it would be deadly for the Christian, and that this worship might enable the Jews

to fulfil the requirement laid on them by God to offer prayer and worship to him? Might it even be the case that devotees of the other great world faiths fulfil the terms of our requirement as they offer, in the terms of their own faith community, prayer and worship to God. Might it be that in all these ways God is prayed to, adored and worshipped?

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